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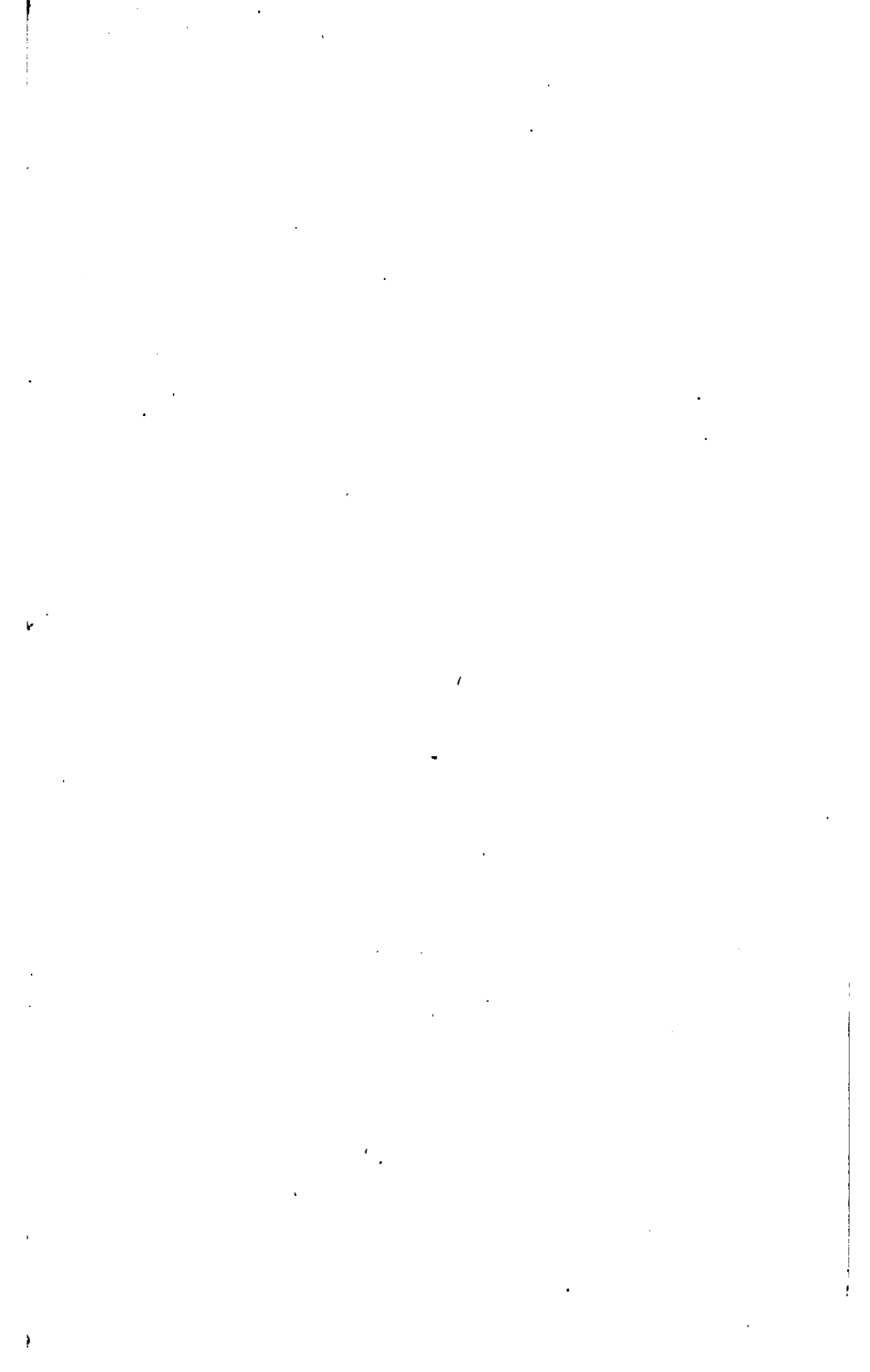
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# EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS:

NEWLY TRANSLATED,

AND EXPLAINED FROM A MISSIONARY POINT OF VIEW.

BY THE

RIGHT REV. J. W. COLENZO, D.D.,

BISHOP OF NATAL.

NEW YORK:

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1868.



TO THE HONOURABLE  
THE SECRETARY FOR NATIVE AFFAIRS  
TO THE NATAL GOVERNMENT,  
THEOPHILUS SHEPSTONE, Esq.

MY DEAR FRIEND—

THIS book contains the substance of many conversations, which I have had with you from time to time, upon the subject of teaching the truths of Christianity to the natives of this colony, and those of other heathen countries. The teaching of the great Apostle to the Gentiles is here applied to some questions, which daily arise in Missionary labours among the heathen, more directly than is usual with those commentators, who have not been engaged personally in such work, but have written from a very different point of view, in the midst of a state of advanced civilisation and settled Christianity. Hence they have usually passed by altogether, or only touched very lightly upon, many points, which are of great importance to Missionaries, but which seemed to be of no immediate practical interest for themselves or their readers.

The views, which I have here advanced, are the results of seven years of Missionary experience, as well

as of many years of previous close study of this Epistle. I had hoped that this book might have been of use with reference to that great work in Zululand to which, as it seemed lately, the Providence of God was more directly calling you—a work which promised immense results of blessing to the natives of this part of Africa, and in which it would have been my joy and pride to have rendered you any assistance in my power. I cannot but believe that the time is not far distant, when the singular abilities, which God has given you, for influencing the native mind,—to which, under the Divine blessing, this colony has been mainly indebted for the order and peace, which, during so many years, have been maintained, within its border,—will be called into yet more active exercise in advancing the civilisation of these tribes.

Meanwhile, I beg you to accept this book, as a token of sincere esteem and friendship, and as a pledge that, if God will, I shall gladly be associated with you, at some future day, in carrying on such a work.

I am, my dear Friend,

Yours, very truly,

J. W. NATAL.

BISHOPSTOWN, *June 1, 1861.*

## INTRODUCTION.

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BEFORE we can enter fully into the Apostle's meaning in this Epistle to the Romans, and see the very gist of his argument, and the line of thought he is following throughout, it is necessary that we should have a clear idea of the persons to whom, and the circumstances under which, it was written. This, which is desirable, of course, for the elucidation of all his Epistles, is absolutely essential here. It is impossible that any one should understand his language in this Epistle, even in the Greek, much less in the English translation, who has not realised to himself, in some measure, the state of things at Rome, at the time when the Apostle wrote, who does not keep that state of things in his mind all along, as he reads his words.

To what class of persons, then, was this Epistle written? We call it the Epistle 'to the Romans,' that is, of course, to the Christian believers then living at Rome. But who were these? And how did there happen to be any Christians at Rome at this time? It is natural to imagine a Christian Church at Rome, definitely formed and fully

developed, like those at Corinth, Antioch, or Ephesus, or, in later times, at Rome itself. And, probably, most readers who have not bestowed much thought upon the subject, would take for granted that these 'Romans,' who are here addressed, were like the Thessalonians, Corinthians, and others, mostly converts, made directly from the *heathen* world, in the midst of the teeming population of the Imperial City. When St. Paul writes (Rom. i. 7) 'to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints,' and speaks to them (i. 5, 6) of his having received apostleship 'for the obedience to the faith *among all nations, among whom also are ye,*' and tells them further on (i. 13) that he 'had oftentimes purposed to come unto them, that he might have some fruit among them, also, as even among *other Gentiles,*' it is plain that he is not writing to Jews, but to Gentiles, —to men who were not merely living at Rome, as numbers of Jews were at this time, but who were really men of the 'nations,' true Romans born and bred, and who had had, most probably, their early training in heathenism.

But, when we look at the Epistle itself, we are at once struck with the peculiarity of its style, and of its main subject-matter. The first eleven chapters would seem to be addressed to Jews, rather than to Christians. By far the greater part of the Epistle assumes in the reader a very familiar acquaintance with Jewish history, and Jewish practices, and Jewish modes of thought, such as no mere ordinary convert from heathenism, especially at a time when there were only manuscripts, and the Books of the Old Testament were not in every one's hands, could possibly have possessed. St. Paul passes rapidly from one



point to another, as if sure of carrying his reader along with him, without stopping for a moment to explain more clearly, to the Roman mind, any one of his allusions. The Jew's 'resting in the Law,' his 'making his boast in God,' his confidence in circumcision, the story of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in some of its minuter details,—the destruction of Pharaoh,—extracts from the Psalms and the Prophets,—all these are brought in, when the argument requires it, without any doubt seeming to cross his mind as to the possibility of his illustrations being unintelligible, and his reasoning failing to take effect, because of any want of acquaintance, on the part of those to whom he wrote, with the main facts of Jewish history. In fact, in some places, he writes directly as to Jews—he sets up a Jew to argue with—as in (ii. 17), 'Behold! thou art called a Jew, &c.,' and in (iv. 1), 'What shall we say then that Abraham, our father, hath found?'

And yet the expressions quoted from the first chapter, and other passages, such as (xi. 13) 'I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office,' and the general tone of the Epistle in many parts, forbid our supposing that he was writing merely or mainly to Jews. How then are we to account for this fact, that in this particular Epistle there is so much reference to Jewish matters, more than in all his other Epistles put together, unless St. Paul wrote also the Epistle to the Hebrews? How is it to be explained that, addressing himself here distinctly to 'Gentiles,' 'Men of the Nations,' Christians of Roman birth, he yet all along assumes in his readers such a perfect knowledge of Jewish matters,

such a strong sympathy with the Jewish mind and feelings?

In order to give the answer to this question, we must consider what light the Scripture records throw upon the origin of the Roman Church. And here we shall come at once upon this inquiry, namely, Was there, in fact, *any* Christian Church at Rome at all, at this time, distinct and definitely marked off from the Jewish community? There would seem to have been none whatever, for the following reasons:

(1) It is certain that no apostle had as yet been at Rome, or taken any prominent part in founding such a Church, or setting in order its affairs. Had it been otherwise, St. Paul must have made some reference to him in this Epistle. And, besides, he tells these very Romans (xv. 20), that he 'strove so to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was already preached, lest he should be *building on another man's foundation*.'

(2) Among the numerous salutations in the last chapter, in which twenty-eight persons are named, and others indicated, to whom, as believers at Rome, the Epistle must be considered to be especially addressed, there is no reference to any kind of Church government as existing among them, to any ruling power in the Christian community, to any presiding or officiating person, whether bishop, presbyter, or deacon. It would have been so natural, in chapter xiii., where he enjoins obedience to the higher *civil* powers, though these were heathen, to have thrown in a word or two, as to their duty also to submit themselves to those, who had the 'rule over them' in spiritual matters, who were

'set over them in the Lord'—if any such there were. It may be said, indeed, that there would appear to be some reference to duly ordained ministers, pastors, and teachers, in the following words (xii. 6—8), 'Having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith, or ministry, let us wait on our ministering, or he that teacheth, on teaching, or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity, he that ruleth, with diligence, he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.' And, certainly, some of these expressions might be understood to refer to Christian ministers, if there were any other sufficient reason for supposing that there were such at Rome at this time,—if there were any trace of them in any other parts of the Epistle. But it seems almost impossible that St. Paul, who knew by name so many of the believers at Rome, should not have saluted by name among the rest the presbyters of the Church, if, indeed, there were any to be saluted. Had he named only two or three persons in the last chapter, we might have inferred, perhaps, that these were saluted by him as prominent in official position; just as in Col. iv. 17, he writes, 'Say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry, which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.' But the very fact that he salutes so many, and makes no particular mention of any one of them having office or authority among them, implies that he knew of none such. Nor is it easy to see how any could have been appointed, if the city of Rome had never as yet been visited by an Apostle. It seems, therefore, more reasonable to explain the words quoted

above, as referring to the mutual services which the 'members of one body' should render to one another, each according to the gift he has received, in their religious communion, or common every-day intercourse, and not to the duties of ordained ministers. Indeed, it is most unlikely that, if the expression, 'he that ruleth or presideth,' is meant to refer to the presiding presbyter, it should be brought in at the close of the sentence, as above.

(3) But the most decisive proof of the non-existence of a definite Christian community or Church at Rome at this time, is the account given in the last chapter of the Acts, of the circumstances which attended St. Paul's first visit to Rome.

For this first visit of St. Paul to Rome took place subsequently to his writing the Epistle; inasmuch as in it (i. 10, 11, 13, 15) he distinctly implies that he was 'longing' indeed to 'see them' at Rome, but was still a 'debtor' to them, and 'had been hindered hitherto,' having not yet found the answer to his request 'that by some means now at length he might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto them.' If, therefore, we find reason to believe that, on his thus coming among them in person, he found no distinct organized Church, we may conclude, *a fortiori*, that there was none at the time when he wrote the Epistle.

Now, we are told in St. Luke's narrative (Acts xxviii. 14), that at Puteoli he found 'brethren.' What this expression means will depend on the view we take of the same language, when applied, in the following verse, to the believers at Rome. For 'from Rome,' we read, 'when *the*

*brethren* heard of us, they came to meet us, whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.' The article is important here—'*the brethren*.' We should infer from this expression that, if not the whole, yet at all events the great body of the believers at Rome came out to meet the Apostle. And if the number had been large, we should surely have had some plainer intimation of the fact, than is given by the simple words, '*the brethren*.' And when he reaches Rome, we do not hear of any gathering of the Church, or of any visit made to the Apostle by the pastors or teachers of the Church, by any presbyter or deacon. The whole tenor of the narrative in Acts xxviii. 17—31, clearly implies that there was nothing of the kind. St. Paul calls together the chief of the Jews, not the elders of the Christian Church; he tells them that 'for the hope of Israel he is bound with this chain.' They answer that they had heard no evil about him from any quarter, which would not surely have been the case, if controversies such as those, which arose in every other Church between St. Paul and the 'party of the circumcision,' had broken out here. And yet the same difficulties must have arisen in Rome, as elsewhere, between the Jewish community and the 'sect' of Christians, if there had been at this time any distinct and anti-Jewish development of Christian principles in the Imperial City. But the 'chief of the Jews' at Rome tell St. Paul, that 'they desire to hear what he thinks; for, as concerning *this sect*, we know that it is everywhere spoken against.' '*This sect*,'—here is the expression which gives us the clue to their present state of feeling, with regard to those who professed to believe in Jesus. They regarded

them only as 'a sect' of the Jews. And they do not seem to have had much personal knowledge of 'this sect' at all. They speak as men who had heard more about it than they had seen—who had no proof before their eyes of the corrupt and dangerous teaching, as they would consider it, which in other places was doing so much mischief, and caused the 'sect' to be so much 'spoken against.' In other words, they had evidently no knowledge of a Christian Church, existing in their very midst, at Rome. There were, doubtless, believers there of a certain kind, of the nature of whose belief something shall be said presently. But, whatever they believed, they had not yet broken loose from the Church of their fathers, they had not yet forsaken the Jewish faith. They had not yet separated themselves from the great body of the Jews in Rome, nor formed themselves into any distinct community.

Let us go on next to consider what the belief of these Christians at Rome was likely to be.

There is no doubt that this Epistle was written at Corinth, during St. Paul's second visit to that city, included in the expression (Acts xx. 2, 3) 'he came into Greece, and there abode three months.' On his first arrival in Corinth (Acts xviii. 2, 3) he found there 'a certain Jew named Aquila, *lately come from Italy*, with his wife Priscilla, (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome,) and came unto them. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them and wrought; for by their occupation they were tentmakers.' 'And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them' (Acts xviii. 11). From the above we may

infer that during those eighteen months St. Paul abode still with Aquila and Priscilla; and we find that when at last 'he sailed thence for Syria' (Acts xviii. 18), Priscilla and Aquila went with him.

Now what is meant by the expression, 'he found a *certain Jew* named Aquila'? We know that at some time or other, Aquila and Priscilla became eminent *Christian* believers; and it would be hard to suppose that St. Paul could have lived so long, in such intimate connexion with them, if they were rigidly fixed in the principles of Judaism. Are we to understand, then, these words, 'a *certain Jew*,' only to refer to Aquila's Jewish birth?—as when St. Paul said to St. Peter (Gal. ii. 14), 'If thou, being a Jew, &c.,' when yet they were both Apostles of Christ. But in that case, would not St. Luke have written a '*certain believing Jew*'? The argument, of course, is not conclusive. But, certainly, the expression used would incline one to suppose that Aquila, when St. Paul first 'found him at Corinth, was a Jew, indeed, still by outward act and profession, and as such, associating freely with his Jewish brethren, but one with a strong *tendency* to Christianity, which St. Paul himself, by his long close intercourse with him, was the means under God of fostering into a downright, earnest, genuine, profession of the Christian faith. Was not, in short, Aquila a specimen of the kind of Christianity, which at that time existed in Italy, among the 'brethren' at Puteoli and Rome? Were not these, in point of fact, either actual born Jews, as Aquila, or Jewish proselytes from among the Romans, who had received in some way some knowledge of the Gospel, and had gone so

far as to recognise in the crucified Jesus the *Christ*, the Messiah, the anointed one of God, who had been so long promised to the Jewish people? Were not these 'brethren' men, who were sincere of heart, and pious and devout in life, whether Jews or Roman proselytes, believing in the true living God, and believing also that He had now visited them according to His promise, and revealed to them their King, but who had not yet abandoned by any means the hope of the Jewish nation, which every Jew inherited as his birthright, and into which every proselyte was baptized,—that infatuated notion of their own importance, merely as children of Abraham and circumcised, which possessed them to the last, and made them think, that, amongst all their iniquities, they were the favourites of God, and sure of entering into His kingdom? Hence we have John the Baptist's warning, 'Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father.'—To them 'circumcision was the seal of the covenant, the charm which protected them from God's wrath : ' *Jowett*, who also quotes from Schoettgen's *Hor. Hebr.*, Vol. 1. p. 499, a remarkable passage, where a Jewish Rabbi, being pressed with the question, 'How could Israelitish heretics, apostates, and otherwise impious persons, after being circumcised, be sent to perdition?—answers, 'God will first uncircumcise them, and so they will go down to hell.'

If such a feeling possessed the hearts of the worst men of the nation, who reckoned that, though their places might be low in the 'kingdom,' yet their claim to it was certain, for the word of God was pledged to their great forefather, —and that word no wickedness of theirs could make void,



for, whatever they might do, God would be faithful who had promised—how much stronger must it have been in the mind of the *pious* Jew. About this ‘Kingdom,’ doubtless, Nicodemus came to inquire, though the report of the conversation begins so abruptly in St. John’s narrative, that we scarcely see at first the reason for the form, which our Lord’s first words assume in it. Nicodemus, however, as a devout Jew, had no doubt about the ‘coming of the kingdom,’ in God’s due time,—not that Kingdom of ‘righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,’ which we, as Christians, know to be the Kingdom of God,—but a Kingdom of some kind, of some unknown, unimaginable glory, over all other nations upon earth, which should one day be ‘restored to Israel.’ Nicodemus also had no doubt as to his own right, not merely as a true believer in God, but as a true born Jew, a child of Abraham, to have a share in it. What he wanted to know was, how he might best prepare himself for it, how he might best attain a worthy place in that kingdom. And he probably asked a question to that effect. Our Lord throws him back at once in His reply to the only true ground of hope. It is as if He had said, (to paraphrase with reverence the sacred words,) ‘You are come to me very confident of your concern in this Kingdom. You are sure, you think, of a place in it. But why are you sure? What ground have you for thinking that you have any place at all in it? Do you imagine that, because you are born of Abraham, your claim will be allowed? But I tell you this will avail you for nothing. Your mere natural descent is no ground at all for any such expectation. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man

be born again—be born a second time, or be born from above, by a supernatural, spiritual birth,—he cannot so much as see the Kingdom of God.’ Nicodemus, in point of fact, was already thus born again, thus born from above ; he had already received that second spiritual birth, though he did not know it. It was the working of God’s good Spirit upon his heart, that had all along been leading him in the way of Truth and Righteousness, and was now leading him to Christ. But he had never been accustomed to think of this. It was a new thing to him, though a Master of Israel, to be told that such work of grace as this was needed for him, as it was needed for all men, if they were to see the Kingdom of God. Though an ‘earthly thing,’ a thing common to men,—which we, Christians, now are more or less plainly taught to recognise from the very first, as the free gift of God, which alone can make us fit for His service here and His glory hereafter,—yet to Nicodemus it was strange and new. He could not, at first, believe, or understand, what the Master was telling him. This, then, was an instance of a devout Jew, fully prepossessed with the infatuation of his people, and requiring to have this false ground of hope struck away from under his feet at the very outset, if he would heartily embrace the faith of Jesus.

So too the Apostles were asking, even after the Resurrection, ‘Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the Kingdom to Israel?’ And the whole tone of the Magnificat, Benedictus, and Nunc Dimittis, evidences the same rooted feeling in the minds of pious Jews, who yet were believers in Christ, that His Coming was to be attended with special benefits to their nation at large, as ‘God had promised to

their forefathers, Abraham and his seed for ever ;' it was to bring 'a light,' indeed, 'to lighten the Gentiles,' but so as 'to be the glory of God's people, Israel.' We have now learned to give to all such passages a spiritual meaning, to understand by 'Abraham's seed,' the children of the faith of Abraham, and by 'God's people, Israel,' the body of true believers. But, certainly, this is not the way in which the first Jewish believers would have interpreted such words. And we have abundant proof,—in the hesitation of St. Peter to baptize the first Gentile convert,—in the contention which arose in consequence of his so doing, in the Church at Jerusalem (Acts xi. 2),—in his subsequent vacillation of conduct, for which St. Paul so severely reprimanded him (Gal. ii. 14, &c.), when 'the other Jews dissembled with him, insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away by their dissimulation,'—in the constant endeavours which were made by certain parties, who came down from Jerusalem (and who must, of course, have been professed believers themselves, or they could have had no influence upon the disciples to whom they came), to turn away the Gentile converts from the pure Gospel, as preached by St. Paul, back to the servile practices of Judaism,—above all, in the vigorous, determined battle, which St. Paul himself was constantly waging with such teachers, as one impelled to this conflict, from a deep sense of the urgent necessity of the case,—in all this we have abundant proof that, for many years, during the first age of Christianity, there existed in the minds of many, who professed to believe in Jesus, a very strong Jewish feeling—a notion that the Jew had in some way a superior claim upon the gifts of God's

favour; and that, if the Gentiles were to be permitted to share them, it could only be, as it were, by taking hold of a man that is a Jew, and 'clinging to his skirts'—by observing the Jewish Law, as the ground of their acceptance with God, only adding to this the recognition of Jesus Christ, as the 'Great Prophet, whom God had raised up to them,' to be the channel, through whom the blessing, which the Jews had a right to claim, as children of Abraham, would be bestowed upon them first, and, through them, upon those of the heathen world, who would first do honour to their law, and adopt their religion.

And, what the Jews themselves held in this respect, they taught, of course, to their proselytes, 'making them tenfold more the children of error than themselves.' If one of these had incurred the contempt or illwill of his own countrymen, by adopting the religion of the Jew (and many of them had undergone the right of circumcision itself), of course, he would be eager to claim his share also in the honours of 'the Kingdom,' of which he was now made free. Like the Jew, his teacher, he, too, would be 'resting in the Law, and making his boast of God,' in his own measure; trusting, indeed, that Christ would profit him in some way, but only as being already a Jew, or a quasi-Jew, and not, simply, as being a man.

This was, in all probability, the state of mind of those at Rome, who professed to believe in Christ at the time when St. Paul wrote this Epistle. The Gospel, we may believe, was first carried to Rome by some of that great number, who were baptized by St. Peter at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. We read of there being present on

that occasion, 'strangers from Rome, Jews and proselytes'—travellers, who had come to Jerusalem to keep the Festival, and perhaps, for other purposes of business or pleasure, and meant to sojourn there for a short time only, and who consisted not only of true-born 'Jews,' but of 'proselytes' also, who, though of Roman birth, had embraced to some extent the Jewish religion, because of the pure theism which it contained, and had connected themselves intimately with the true-born Israelites. We have abundant evidence from profane writers that such Jews abounded at this time at Rome, and that they had made many proselytes. Surely, among the three thousand souls, who were added to the Church on the day of Pentecost, it is reasonable to believe that some were 'strangers from Rome.' They were baptized on that day, impressed by the facts which they had witnessed, and 'pricked to the heart' by St. Peter's words. These men had, doubtless, heard at Jerusalem the story of Jesus of Nazareth,—how He had gone about doing good, and working mighty wonders of healing mercy among the people, and speaking mighty words of truth and love in their hearing. They had heard the story of His Death, His Resurrection and Ascension, from the lips of those, who had only just before been actual witnesses of those events, but who had not even themselves realised the full meaning of them. They had been present when the Spirit came with power on the day of Pentecost, and had heard the Apostles, Galileans as they were, men despised and unlearned, 'speaking with other tongues the wonderful works of God.' They had listened to St. Peter's address, and been convinced by it, that He, who had been

rejected of men, was yet the chosen One of God,—that He, who had been cast out as an unclean thing by the chief priests and the great body of the Jewish people, was yet, indeed, their Messiah, the Anointed One, the promised son of David, the seed of Abraham, ‘in whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed.’ They had never heard His gracious words, nor seen His form, nor been partakers in the guilt of those who had ‘hid their faces from Him,’ or who had ‘taken Him by wicked hands, and crucified, and slain Him.’ Hence, perhaps, they were the more ready to receive St. Peter’s words, and to acknowledge Him, of whom they heard such wonders, and of whose power they had been themselves eye-witnesses in the occurrence of the day of Pentecost, as the true King of the Jewish nation, their Saviour and Lord. And so they ‘gladly received the Word, they believed, and were baptized.’ Thus they made profession of their faith in Jesus. For a few days, perhaps, they kept company with the Apostles, ‘continuing in their doctrine, and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.’ But, then, when the festival was over, they would return to their own homes at Rome, and take with them what knowledge they had gained of the Christian Faith.

But what, we must again ask, was the extent of that knowledge, and of their acquaintance with the principles of Christianity, as St. Paul afterwards unfolded them, when God Himself had ‘revealed His Son in him’? We are so apt to overlook the fact that, in those early days, the fullness of the Truth was not developed, as in these days every

Christian child possesses it, that we are ready at once to connect, with their baptism and profession of Christianity, all that we should understand by it, if we spoke of the baptism of a Christian convert from heathenism, under the teaching of a missionary of our own day. 'Blessed, indeed, are the eyes which see the things which we see!' Taught as we are by the Epistles of St. Paul, and the writings of St. John the Divine, we know now, and we should teach our native converts to know from the very first, truths, which even St. Peter for a long time did not know, though enlightened from above on the day of Pentecost. Much, indeed, of his Jewish prejudices and prepossessions must have been shaken on that day, but not all by any means. He could still, in the true spirit of Jewish exclusiveness, seven or eight years afterwards, hesitate about keeping company or eating with Cornelius and his friends, as things 'common and unclean.' And after the baptism of Cornelius, we are told that the Apostles and brethren that were in Judæa, when they heard his story, 'held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.'—It is plain that, up to this time, they still clung to the notion of their superiority as Jews and children of Abraham. And yet Cornelius was no mere heathen when St. Peter went to visit him. He was 'a pious man, and one that feared God with all his house,'—words which indicate a proselyte of the gate, one who had adopted the Jewish religious faith, without conforming to its ceremonial observances, and so becoming a 'proselyte of righteousness.' These 'strangers from Rome' were probably of the latter class—some of them, at all events, circumcised as the Jews.

Nor was St. Peter's conduct wholly corrected even by what happened in the case of Cornelius. For, though specially taught on this occasion the lesson, that he should count nothing common or unclean, which God had made clean, we find him, ten years afterwards, actually 'withdrawing and separating himself' from the Gentile baptized converts, 'fearing those of the circumcision.' We cannot wonder, therefore, that he did not preach to the assembled multitudes, on the day of Pentecost, such a sermon, exactly, as a Christian Divine of the present day might preach. He spoke as a Jew to Jews, of the prophet Joel and the patriarch David, and of the oath which God had sworn to the latter, that 'of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up (Christ) the Messiah to sit on his throne.' 'Therefore,' said he, 'let all the House of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ—both King and Messiah.' Such words as these, and 'many other' like words, these 'strangers from Rome' must have heard on the day of Pentecost,—many other *like* words, because the language of the Apostles, Peter and John, in the addresses recorded in the third chapter of the Acts, is precisely similar in character. There is not a word in them all, calculated to shake the confidence of the Jew, as a child of Abraham. There is much, which might be turned to a perverse purpose, for building up the fond hope and the proud expectation of the Jewish nation. 'Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me: Him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever He shall say unto you.' Was not



Moses their mighty leader and lawgiver and conqueror of old? How easy and natural for the heart of a pious Jew, yet untaught to spiritualize the prophetic promises, to suppose that a fresh time of glory was at hand for God's own people! 'Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, In thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.' What seed would that be but the Jewish nation—at least, the devout, obedient part of it? Would they not even now be raised from their abject state, and become as the stars of heaven for glory and multitude? 'Unto you first, God, having raised up His son, Jesus, sent Him to bless you, by turning away every one of you from his iniquities.' Yes, they would confess the iniquity of their priests and people in times past, and specially in the bloody act, with which Jerusalem was still ringing, when their rulers had 'denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto them, and had killed the Prince of Life.' Yes, they would acknowledge Him as Christ and King, and so await 'the times of refreshing and restitution of all things, which should come from the presence of the Lord' to Israel, when 'Jesus Christ, whom the Heaven must now receive for a season, should come again,' and set up amidst men His Kingdom upon earth, of which they, the sons of Abraham, should be, if not the exclusive inheritors, yet, at all events, the lords and princes.

The confession of many, perhaps of most of the earliest Jewish believers, went, probably, no further than this. They did not acknowledge Him, for they did not know Him then, as the Eternal Son of God, the only-begotten of the

Father, the Brightness of His Glory, the express image of His Person. He was, indeed, in their eyes, the Son of God, but only in that lower sense, in which they supposed their Messiah would come as the Son of God. It was not on this account merely, because our Saviour called Himself the Son of God, that the Pharisees were offended with Him; but because they fancied that He had used those words in a higher sense than they did, and seemed to make Himself equal with God. They took up stones to stone Him, because He said, 'I and my Father are One.' And our Lord Himself, who did not at that time intend to reveal the mysteries of His Divine Nature, which men could not look upon, until their eyes should be enlightened by the Spirit of Truth, replied in such a way as to silence their objections, by appealing to the language used of themselves in the Holy Scriptures, which surely might be used of the Anointed Messenger of God. 'Is it not written in your Law, I said, Ye are Gods? If he called them Gods, unto whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), say ye of Him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?' It cannot be believed for a moment that in these words our Lord was merely evading the point of their charge. Such a course would never have been consistent with the character of Him, who was perfect truth and sincerity. They accused Him of blasphemy, because they *thought* He 'made Himself equal with God' by what He said. If He *really did do so*, and did intend by His words to do so, it is impossible to believe that He would have replied to them in the way He did. And it is very

natural that unbelievers should lay hold of this passage, as it is sometimes explained, to raise from it a charge of quibbling and dishonesty against Him, whose every word is Truth. But there is no ground for supposing that our Lord did intend by these words, 'I and my Father are One,' to express that Divine Truth, which was afterwards so clearly enounced by St. John, 'The Word was with God, and the Word was God.' He was not then speaking at all of His Substantial Unity with the Father, but only of His Unity of Will and Word with Him. We see this at once, if we look at the context. 'My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's Hand. I and my Father are One.' (John x. 29, 30.) He had just before said, '*I* give unto my sheep Eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of *my* Hand.' Why? 'Because I am only carrying out the Will and Purpose of my Father, who is above all. They are in *His* Hand, if they are in *mine*. Because I come from Him, therefore my Word is His; I am commissioned and empowered to declare His Mind and Will; all that I say and do is in His name. It is one and the same thing to say that *I* will keep them, and to say that *He* will keep them. For I and my Father are One, and I do always such things, and such things only, as please Him, and speak such words as I have heard from Him.' Our Lord seems to have intended no more than this by the expression, though it sounded to the Jews as if He were taking higher ground than any mere man might take. They were offended that He coupled Himself, a mere man as they regarded Him, in one breath with the

Majesty of God. 'He made Himself equal,' they said, 'with God.' And yet in truth He did not, and did not intend to do so by these words, but only to express that His Mind was wholly one with the Mind of his Eternal Father, who had sanctified Him, and sent Him into the world. It does not appear that our Lord ever confessed His Divinity on Earth, or revealed His full Name to His disciples, until that last evening, when He spoke of 'the Glory, which He had with His Father before the world was.' Otherwise all His expressions might be, and probably were, understood, even by His chosen followers, as the words of a mere man, a chosen Messenger of God, having something strange, no doubt, and mysterious about Him, but a man still like unto themselves, though one wholly intent upon fulfilling to the uttermost the work of Him who sent Him. They did not even receive the full meaning of those deep words, which He uttered in His last solemn prayer. If they had done so, or believed fully in Him who spoke them, is it possible that they should have turned away that very night in panic terror, when they 'all forsook Him and fled'? It was for the Spirit to take afterwards of the things of Christ and reveal them to the Apostles, and through them to the world.

Professing then such a faith as that above described, and making such an acknowledgment as this of Him, whom God had made both Lord and Christ, were those three thousand baptized on the Day of Pentecost, and many others afterwards. The narrative in the Acts, and the Epistles of St. Paul, sufficiently show that many were admitted into the Church by baptism, in those early days, who were very de-

ficient in that which we should now consider an intelligent knowledge of the Christian Faith. The best of them were still devout and pious Jews in heart and practice, though baptized into the name of Jesus, and recognising His Divine Mission. Such, we may believe, were those, who took back to Rome the first tidings of the spread of the Gospel after the Day of Pentecost. They had no presbyters or deacons among them, much less a bishop in the later sense of the word; for none had yet been ordained in the Christian Church, even at Jerusalem. They were merely individual Jews, or Roman proselytes, as Jewish as their teachers—perhaps more so, if possible, from the very sacrifices they had made to obtain their present standing. They had professed their faith in the Crucified, as the Messiah who was to come for the Jewish nation, and, in so doing, they had, of course, passed censure on the act which had condemned Him. But they saw no reason for forsaking their own body at Rome, their own modes of worship, their own rulers and elders. They may, perchance, have propagated to one and another the views, which they themselves had adopted. They may possibly have baptized a few in the faith, by lay-baptism of course, as there seems to have been no pastor, and no ordained minister of any kind, among them. But such teaching as this could not have gone very far, and we find, in fact, *no sign of any distinct Church existing at Rome, when the Apostle first came to it, more than thirty years after the Day of Pentecost.* ‘The brethren’ were still not too numerous to be able to go out and meet St. Paul upon the road, without attracting special notice. They were still not so separated from the great body of their fellow-

countrymen at Rome, as to have excited any sinister suspicions in the minds of the 'chief of the Jews,' as to the evil tendency of the views which they had embraced. They were regarded still at Rome as a mere sect of the Jews, and, probably, themselves had as yet no distinct idea of the true doctrine of God's grace in the Gospel. The best of them were what Aquila and Priscilla might have been, humanly speaking, had they never met with St. Paul, or what Apollos might have been, had he never been taken in hand by them, and 'taught the way of God more perfectly.'

For such, probably, were Aquila and Priscilla themselves, when St. Paul found them at Corinth, fresh from Italy, that is, from Rome, 'because Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome.' Knowing something already of the faith of Jesus, and probably, already baptized into that faith, though still mixing familiarly as Jews with their Jewish brethren (and, indeed, there was no Christian Church at Corinth at this time), they were naturally attracted to St. Paul on his arrival, and he to them. Taking up his abode with them, he would soon find how imperfect their views were of the Christian Doctrine, how Jewish their sentiments. But, day by day, during those eighteen months, he would have opportunities of setting forth the truth to them. And he so won their hearts to the true Spirit of the Gospel, that they went with him from Corinth to Ephesus, and there were enabled to do for Apollos what St. Paul himself had done for them.

Meanwhile how natural that, during this long interval, the state of things at Rome should often be the subject of

discourse between the Apostle and his two friends! They knew all about it, and could tell him the names of all those in Rome, who like themselves, had adopted the Christian faith, however imperfect might be their knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. *How, otherwise, did St. Paul come to know the names of so many of the residents in Rome, a city which he had never seen?* In one chapter of this Epistle, writing to persons, to whom he appears to have been a perfect stranger in the flesh, he sends more salutations than in all his other Epistles put together. May it not be that the twenty-eight persons mentioned by name, and the others referred to in Rom. xvi., comprise really the whole register, as it were, the *church-roll*, of believers at that time in Rome? Writing to perfect strangers, would not St. Paul's innate *courtesy*, as well as his great *tact*, lead him to show an interest in each individual person, if possible, by sending so many salutations, winning access for his words in this way to their hearts, and smoothing down any little asperity of feeling, which his sharper language, in the course of the Epistle, might possibly have aroused?

Let it be observed, however, that this does not at all affect the general question, to *what sort of persons* this Epistle was written. Whether they were known to St. Paul beforehand or not, whether he had heard about them individually from Aquila and Priscilla or not, still *it is certain* that in this Epistle he is writing to persons, who, while professing Christianity, and living faithfully according to their light, are still possessed with Jewish principles and prejudices, and in danger of substituting, for the Gospel of God's grace to man, merely a new edition of Judaism. As

it seems, however, highly probable that he did actually get his information, about the state of things in Rome, from Aquila and Priscilla, and others like them, whom he met with abroad, I shall conform my language to this supposition. The reader, who may not feel the same strong conviction on this point, will see that it is immaterial, as regards the interpretation of the Epistle itself. But, certainly, starting with this assumption, we can account most naturally for the Apostle writing such an Epistle, and for the tone which he adopts throughout it.

We may now form a better conception of the circumstances under which St. Paul wrote this Epistle. He had now arrived at Corinth for the second time. He had left Aquila and Priscilla behind at Ephesus, while he himself went up to Jerusalem (xviii. 21, &c.), and afterwards passed through Galatia, Phrygia, &c., on his way back to Ephesus, where in the interim Aquila and Priscilla had been instructing Apollos, and had sent him on to Corinth. Did he find them still at Ephesus? From 1 Cor. xvi. 19 it would seem that he did, and that for some part, at least, of the two years (Acts xix. 10), which he spent at Ephesus, they continued with him. 'After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome.' (Acts xix. 21.) What made him *just now* think of going to Rome? Was it that he had *lately* parted with Aquila and Priscilla, and that they had *gone back* to Rome, the edict of Claudius being no longer in existence? He sent Timothy and Eras-



tus forward into Macedonia to announce his coming, and 'himself stayed in Asia for a season.' Then came the uproar at Ephesus, about the goddess Diana; after which St. Paul left that city, spent some time in visiting the churches of Macedonia, 'going over those parts, and giving them much exhortation,' and then came into Greece, and so, no doubt, though it is not named in the history of the Acts, to Corinth. He abode in Greece 'three months,' perhaps, chiefly at Corinth, where 'Erastus, the chamberlain of the city,' was with him, when he wrote to the Romans (Rom. xvi. 23). And accordingly, we find that, though Erastus was sent on *from* Asia with Timothy, he does not return into Asia with him (Acts xx. 4).

Supposing now that Aquila and Priscilla remained at Ephesus with St. Paul, till the end (or nearly) of the 'two years,' we shall have (allowing one or two months for the 'season' mentioned in Acts xix. 22, and two or three for the time spent in Macedonia) an interval of some three or five months—perhaps, even eight or ten—between his parting with Aquila and Priscilla, and his being again at Corinth, purposing to 'see Rome.' There was time, in short, for them to have returned to Rome, where the Epistle to the Romans finds them (xvi. 3), and get comfortably settled; and St. Paul might have distinctly on his mind the conversations he had had with them, the persons they and others had named to him, and the promise, which he may very possibly have made to them, of coming to Rome in person as God gave him opportunity. It is true some time had now passed since Aquila and Priscilla themselves had left Rome originally. St. Paul had spent one

year and six months with them. Since then, as a little calculation will show, probably two years and a half or three years must have elapsed before St. Paul is found again at Corinth. So then four or five years must have passed since they left Rome, before St. Paul wrote his Epistle to the Romans. It may be asked, was there no change among the believers at Rome in this interval, so that those, whom they left there as such, were still living there and were still believers? But it is not necessary to suppose this. Why might not 'strangers from Rome,' Jews or proselytes, come to Ephesus during the two years he spent there, and have been the means of acquainting the Apostle and his two friends with any change of circumstances at Rome, up to the time when Priscilla and Aquila set sail for Rome, in advance, we may suppose, of St. Paul himself? May they not even have communicated again with the Apostle after their return to Rome, as to the actual state of things in that city? Though no mention is made in this Epistle of such a letter having reached him, it would be easy to account for this not being stated under the circumstances.

Let us suppose then the Apostle at Corinth, having parted not long ago from his two friends, Aquila and Priscilla, who are now again settled at Rome, and are accordingly saluted by him first among those, to whom his letter is addressed. He finds Phœbe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchrea, one of the two ports of Corinth, about to sail for Rome. And he decides to write a letter by her to the believers at Rome, most of whom, indeed, were unknown to him in person, but with all of whom he felt himself, as it were, at home, through the reports which he

had received from Priscilla and Aquila, and, perhaps, from others. At all events, he is sure that his letter will be welcomed by his two friends. *They*, at least, will thoroughly understand the meaning, and enter into the spirit, of it. They had, doubtless, gone back to Rome charged by their own enlightened consciences, as well as, possibly, by the Apostle's direct injunctions—taught, certainly, by his practice, which they had so long witnessed so closely—to do their own utmost to break down the Judaism of the Romish believers, and spread among them right notions of the free grace of God in Christ. They would find this work, of course, one of extreme difficulty. They must surely have *attempted* it, after the training they had themselves. It is not impossible, as has been above suggested, that, even since their return to Rome, they may have reported to the Apostle such a state of feeling existing there, as to have given the tone to this letter. Otherwise, St. Paul must have known enough of the Jewish prejudices, which he found prevailing everywhere, and which, from some source or other, he had reason to believe prevailed very strongly among the most pious believers at Rome, to have no doubt as to the object at which he must mainly aim in writing, namely, to remove, if possible, that inveterate notion of the Jews' superiority and high standing in God's favour, which was a worm lying at the root of all their Christian profession. Indeed, the delicate manner, in which, from the very first, he sets himself to this work, leads strongly to the belief that he had had some previous intimations of the necessity for such a letter from Aquila and Priscilla, and a request that he would send it. Either by a special commu-

nication from Rome itself, or else by their many previous conversations with him, they must have made him strongly sensible that such an effort was needed. He *must* have had some information given him about the believers at Rome, which led him to address them as he has done, approaching them at first as strangers, with all possible courtesy and respect, manifestly endeavouring to avoid at the very outset giving them any offence, by provoking their Jewish prejudices, yet afterwards, for chapter after chapter, plunging into arguments, which could only be intelligible to one of thoroughly Jewish training, whether a Jew by birth or a proselyte, and reasoning at times almost in a tone of severity and indignation with them.

# ST. PAUL'S

## EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

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### CHAP. I. 1—7.

(1) Paul, a bondman of Jesus Christ, called *to be* an Apostle, separated unto the Gospel of God, (2) (which He had promised before by His prophets in Holy Scriptures,) (3) concerning His Son, (who came of the seed of David according to the flesh, (4) who was defined *to be* the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, in consequence of the resurrection from the dead,) Jesus Christ, our Lord, (5) through whom we received grace and apostleship, unto obedience of faith among all the nations, for the honour of His Name, (6) among whom are ye also, called *ones* of Jesus Christ; (7) to all that are in Rome, beloved *ones* of God, called *to be* saints, grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### NOTES.

1. It must be borne in mind that St. Paul is here writing (i) to persons who were strangers to himself in person, (ii) to people of the great imperial city, (iii) to men, whom he believes to be imbued with very strong Jewish

prejudices, (iv) to men, however, whom, as living in the very centre of the Roman world, he is most anxious to conciliate by every fair means, and to win their attention to his words, before he goes on to uproot some of their most cherished convictions. This will account for many of the expressions in this introductory passage, and for the general style of the whole of it.

We may notice that it is somewhat long and formal—not like the short salutations to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians, to whom he was pouring out the fulness of his heart, as to familiar friends and loving disciples. In 2 Corinthians the address is of the same kind, when he finds that they had so readily attended to his reproofs in the first. But in 1 Corinthians and Galatians there is the same characteristic as here, a certain stiffness and formality, which betrays that he is writing, in the case of those two Epistles, to churches which made him uneasy and unhappy by their proceedings, and, in the case now before us, to a body of perfect strangers, though people of special interest and importance.

2. v. 1. *a bondman of Jesus Christ.* By the use of these words at the very outset, he disclaims all notion of his writing to them in his own name; he disarms all hostility, and takes away all occasion for offence, on account of his seeming to intrude himself upon persons unknown to him, and into matters with which he had no concern. 'I am but a servant, or rather a bondman, who must do the Master's work; and I am doing it here, as best I can, in writing this to you. This must be my apology to you, for the seeming abruptness of this act of mine, in thus undertaking to address you, though, most of you, perfect strangers to me in the flesh.'

Though the word 'bondman' or 'slave' sounds harsh to English ears, it is desirable to retain it here and in other places, in such a translation as this, in which it is sought to represent as accurately as possible, in an English version, the Greek original.

It is worth notice, perhaps, that he does *not* use this formula, 'bondman or slave, &c.,' in any of his salutations to the other Churches, where his person was already well known, except that to the Philippians he speaks of *himself* and Timothy together as 'bondmen of Jesus Christ,' dropping the mention of his apostleship altogether, when addressing this flock 'dearly beloved and longed for,' his 'joy and crown.' So too in those addressed to Timothy and Philemon. But in that to Titus he does use the double formula, 'bondman of God, but apostle of Jesus Christ,' and his salutation again is long and formal. Was he, in fact, well known in person to the churches in Crete? It is plain that he had visited that island, as he had left Titus behind. But he left him to 'ordain elders in every city,'—as he 'had appointed him.' Does not this very expression intimate that there

was not the same familiar personal intimacy between St. Paul and these churches, as between the other churches that he had planted? He had not lived eighteen months or two years among them, as he had at Corinth and Ephesus; (Timothy was to ordain elders, but not 'in every city'). At all events, we have no intimation of any protracted sojourn in Crete. And the strong terms he uses in speaking of the Cretans,—quoting the proverb, 'The Cretans are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies,' and adding for himself, 'This witness is true,'—seems to imply no very close and intimate relations with them.

3. v. 1. *called to be an apostle.* 'As a servant, I have an office and charge committed to me, being called and commissioned of God, not self-constituted or appointed by man, to the work of the apostleship, one part of which I am now discharging towards you.'

4. v. 1. *separated unto the Gospel of God.* 'This is the work, the one work, for which I have been separated (Acts xiii. 2, Gal. i. 15) and set apart, to proclaim God's blessed message of love to the world.'

5. v. 2. *which He had promised before, &c.* This parenthetical passage, and the one that shortly follows, are specially intended to touch pleasantly the hearts of his Jewish readers. He is feeling his way into their confidences. But we partly lose the force of the original here in the English translation. The same Greek root is found in the word for Gospel, and that translated 'promised before.' Perhaps a rude notion of how it reads in the Greek may be gained, by remembering that the word Gospel means *Good Spell*, or good tidings, and by using the word 'spell' in the old sense of 'declare or deliver tidings'—so translating 'separated unto the Gospel of God, which He had before spelled (published, intimated) in Holy Scriptures.' Wishing, as has been said, to win his way softly into their confidences, he tells them, as soon as possible, that he is not coming to do away with the teaching of the Scriptures, and to overthrow the grand hope of the Jewish nation. Where he can avoid it, he would not give any offence to his Jewish readers. He will turn their very prejudices into prepossessions in favour of the truths of Christianity. The Gospel, he tells them, of which he is the preacher, is no new thing, only the development of that which was preached of old to their fathers, only the fulfilment and realization of that which had been all along declared and promised to them.

6. v. 3. *who came of the seed of David, &c.* So too the Son of God, of whom the Gospel testifies, came, he says, of the seed of David by his natural descent, and thus the ancient words of their own prophets were fulfilled.

7. v. 4. *defined to be the Son of God with power.* But that which defined, determined, distinguished, marked Him out, from all others of human

birth, to be the Son of God with power, was (not the resurrection itself, but) that *which followed from the resurrection*, the manifestation that was made of the glory now given to Him as the Son of God, 'exalted to the right hand of power,' having 'all power given to Him in heaven and earth.' That consequence of the resurrection was the pouring out of the Spirit upon all flesh—the sending forth His messengers unto all the ends of the earth—the giving power to them to preach, and to their hearers to receive their words—the giving 'grace and apostleship unto the obedience of faith among all nations.' In this way was the Lord Jesus clearly 'marked out' to be the Son of God with power, in consequence of the resurrection from the dead. Thus St. Peter said, 'This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear;' and again, 'Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour.....And we are witnesses of these things, and *so also is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him.*' In the following passage, St. Peter speaks of our Lord as being 'defined' or 'marked out' by the Resurrection itself, without referring to the consequences of it. 'Him God raised up the third day, and shewed Him openly, not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead; and He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is He which was *marked out* of God to be the Judge of the quick and the dead.' And so also St. Paul: 'He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He has *marked out*, *whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead.*' Thus was He 'defined to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, (a Hebraism for the Holy Spirit,) out of, in consequence of, the resurrection from the dead.'

8. v. 5. *we received grace and apostleship, &c.* 'We (probably meant for I) received *from* God the Father, *through* the Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church, *by* the Holy Spirit, the dispenser of all grace or favour from the Father and the Son, the grace (xii. 8) which enables for the apostleship.'

9. v. 5. *unto the obedience of faith among all the nations*—that so there may be the 'obedience of faith' in every nation throughout the world—the obedience springing from a living trust in God's Love, the obedience of the heart to the spirit of God's Law, not the slavish obedience to the letter—to the honour of that Divine Name, in whose strength alone such results would be obtained and such obedience rendered.

10. v. 6. *called ones, beloved ones.* These expressions, as well as that of 'saints,' that is, holy ones, consecrated, set apart for God, are used here,



as elsewhere, to describe all Christians, as we say 'the faithful,' 'believers,' &c. Christians are said to be 'called, beloved, set apart for God,' though they may not be walking worthily of their vocation, nor of the grace or favour, whereby they have been distinguished, nor of the work which God's Spirit has been working within them, to fit them for God's special service here and for His brighter glory hereafter.

## CHAP. I. 8—12.

(8) And, first, I thank my God through Jesus Christ on behalf of you all, because your faith is being told of in all the world. (9) For God is my witness, (to whom I do *religious* service with my spirit in the Gospel of His Son), how incessantly I make mention of you, (10) always at my prayers making request, if may-be at last, some time or other, I may be conducted prosperously, through the will of God, to come to you. (11) For I long to see you, that so I may impart to you some spiritual gift, to your being established—(12) that is, to my being comforted together among you, by the mutual faith both of you and me.

## NOTES.

11. v. 8. *through Jesus Christ.* All the Apostle's communion with God is through his Lord.

12. v. 8. *in all the world.* This, of course, is hyperbolic language. He means that he had heard of them in various places, far away from Rome, at Corinth certainly, and, probably, at Ephesus, and elsewhere.

13. v. 9. *do religious service.* The English word 'serve' does not here give the full force of the original Greek, which is exclusively applied in the New Testament to the performance of *religious service*, particularly to the worship of God in the Temple, or even to the worship going on in heathen temples. St. Paul seems to imply that, though not a priest, employed to minister in the temple service, with outward forms and ceremonies, at stated times, he was yet employed in a religious service, which was inward and spiritual, and going on at all times, 'incessantly,' as he says, in the secret utterances of the heart, as well as in his set times of prayer. In such a service, with his spirit, he was continually offering up prayers, such

as not himself only, but all Christians, the whole 'spiritual priesthood,' had the duty and privilege of offering.

14. v. 11. *some spiritual gift*; that is, not any extraordinary *miraculous* gift, but such consolation and spiritual support and blessing, as he might be the means of imparting, by having personal intercourse and conversation with them, and opportunities of setting forth to them more fully the living truths of God's Love in the Gospel.

15. v. 12. *that is, to my being comforted together among you*. Here, with a delicacy characteristic of St. Paul, and especially suited to the present circumstances of his writing, lest he, a mere stranger in the flesh to them, should seem to be arrogating too much to himself, in speaking of coming to 'establish' them, he changes the form of expression, and speaks of the mutual blessing, which they would receive from one another.

#### CHAP. I. 13—17.

(13) But I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, that I often purposed to come to you, and was hindered hitherto, that so I may have some fruit among you, as also among the other nations. (14) Both to Greeks and Barbarians, both to wise and simple, I am debtor. (15) So my part is ready to preach the Gospel to you which are in Rome also. (16) For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for the power of God it is unto salvation to every one that believeth, both to Jew first and Greek. (17) For the righteousness of God is being revealed in it, (a righteousness) from faith unto faith, as it is written, 'The righteous shall live out of faith.'

#### NOTES.

16. v. 13. *I often purposed . . . and was hindered*. St. Paul wishes them to know these two facts, both that he often purposed, and that he was hindered, did not change or drop his purpose.

17. v. 13. *that so I may have some fruit also among you*,—not 'that I might,' but 'that I may' have fruit among you, not at some one time, or at particular times, but permanently, at all times, as the abiding result of my labours.

18. v. 14. *Greeks and Barbarians.* As the Jews divided the whole human race into two classes, Jews and Gentiles, which last word was equivalent to foreigners, men of the nations (Zulu, *abantu bezizwe*), so the Greeks summed up all mankind as either Greeks or Barbarians, including in the former their Roman masters in the time of the Apostle. Or, rather, the Romans now used these distinctions, it being their custom to send their sons to Athens to finish their education by learning Greek as an accomplishment, and studying the Greek philosophy. Hence the expression 'Greeks and Barbarians' is nearly equivalent to 'learned and unlearned,' intellectual and unintellectual, or, as St. Paul says, 'wise and simple.'

19. v. 14. *I am debtor.* I am bound by my duty, as a servant and an apostle, to minister to all. I owe it to them all to do so. My now writing to you is no act of officious intrusiveness on my part; it is but the discharge in some measure of a *debt* which I owe to you.

20. v. 16. *For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.* The connexion of the Apostle's thoughts seems to be this. 'Having a duty to discharge, I am ready for my part to preach the Gospel at Rome also—yes, in the midst of the great Imperial City—amidst the majesty of the Senate, the wisdom of the Schools, the glory of the Empire. *For* I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. Even there at Rome also, among the high and mighty, the wise and prudent,—as well as in other places of commoner name,—it will be found, now, as always, the 'power of God unto salvation' to every one that believeth.'

21. v. 16. *the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.* These words are the very *key-words* of the whole Epistle. St. Paul is gradually, in the most wise and least offensive manner, bringing forward the *three* points, which he means to press hereafter with all his might, breaking utterly down thereby the *three* great Jewish prejudices. These points are as follows:

(i) that salvation is wholly of *God*, wrought by His Power, bestowed by His Love, of His own free grace in the Gospel, and therefore to be meekly and thankfully received as His gift, not arrogantly claimed as a matter of right;

(ii) that it is meant for Jew and Gentile alike, for *all* that believe, without any special favour or distinction;

(iii) that it is to be received by faith alone, by 'all that *believe*,' by simply taking God at His word and trusting in His Love, not to be sought by a round of ceremonial observances, or acts of legal obedience.

The Apostle is referring here, but only just referring by a hint, as it were,—glancing at them for a moment and passing on—but so foreshadowing what will be the real substance of his Epistle—to the three great pre-

possessing errors of the Jewish mind, which, lying deep in every Jew's heart, though perhaps lying dormant for a time, as in the case of Nicodemus and St. Peter, till circumstances called them into activity, entirely prevented their making progress in the real spirit of the Gospel, and, if allowed to remain, would make their profession of Christianity only differ by a shade from that of the most exclusive Judaism, and effectually shut out the great body of the heathen population of the City from any connexion with it.

These three errors have been already touched upon. But, as it is important, in order to get a clear insight into the Apostle's argument, that they should be distinctly noted, it may be well to restate them, and the corrections which the Apostle applies to them.

(i) The Jew said, 'I am a favoured creature—a child of Abraham, and therefore a child of God, and an heir of His Kingdom, whatever my life may be. What have *I* to do with a message of salvation? Perhaps, for the heathen it may be needed. But the Kingdom of God is mine, by virtue of the promise made to my great forefather. I have a *right* to enter it. I *claim* it as mine.'

This error St. Paul must correct by showing that he had no such right, that he, the Jew, needed the free gift of *Righteousness*, as well as all others of the human race—that he too was 'concluded under sin' like others, and had no claim whatever, because of God's promises to Abraham, to enter the Kingdom as a matter of right. He had, in fact, wholly mistaken the nature of those promises. They were never meant to give such immunities and privileges to the mere natural descendants of Abraham. The Jew must be made to feel his need, as well as every other human being, of a Gospel, a glad life-giving message, which should be the 'Power of God unto Salvation' to himself as well as to others.

(ii) But the Jew might say, 'Suppose that I admit this, yet, at all events, the Messiah is to come specially for us. He is to be the carrying out and realization of those promises to our forefathers, which made us the favoured people above others. You do not surely mean to say that we, Jews, the children of Abraham, the chosen family of God, are to be put on an *equality* with the common Gentile in this respect?'

'Yes!' St. Paul would say, 'you are to be put on a perfect equality with the meanest Gentile. You will stand no better than they in this respect—not a whit more *safe* from God's wrath—not a whit more *sure* of entering the Kingdom. No difference whatever will be made between Jew and Gentile, in the day when God shall judge the secret thoughts and doings of men. No special favour will be shewn to you as a Jew, to screen you from the just consequences of your doings. A righteous judgment

will be dealt out to all—a judgment tempered with mercy—by Him, who knows the hearts and lives of all. Only from those who, like you, have received more than others, will the more be required. You must realize, in short, what is meant when it is said that the Gospel is the ‘Power of God unto Salvation unto *every one* that believeth,’ Jew and Gentile alike.

(iii) Still, however, the Jew might persevere and say: ‘But surely our *Law* is not to be done away with. At all ovents, the Gentiles, if they are to partake of the Gospel, and even to be admitted to share on equal terms with us, must conform to our religion, and practise those observances, which have come down to us through fifteen hundred years on the authority of Moses, with the Divine Seal upon them. They must submit to be circumcised, as we are; they must recognise our Priesthood and Temple Worship, and practise our solemn rites and ceremonies.’

‘No!’ says the Apostle again, ‘Faith, simple faith, a true, living, child-like faith and trust, that worketh by love, this is all that God seeks of all—no circumcision—no Jewish practices or peculiarities. The formal observances, enjoined in the Law of Moses, were intended for a season only, till He should come, to whom the Law was pointing all along. These are all now done away in Christ Jesus. ‘The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that *believeth*.’

We shall have occasion to refer again to these three points. For the present, as has been said, the Apostle does but just hint at them, and pass on, intending presently to return deliberately, and unfold the full meaning of his words. He wishes to break the matter deliberately, as it were, to his readers—not to alarm their prejudices, before he has got his hold fairly upon them, and fixed their attention upon the subject he has in hand. Nevertheless, in point of fact, his words in this single verse (v. 16) do contain a distinct contradiction to these three extravagant assumptions, on which the opposition of the Jewish mind to the Gospel was based. We may take, in short, this verse as the *motto* so to speak, to be set at the head of the Epistle, announcing the thesis which he intends to maintain in it; though, as we shall presently see, he sums up the essence of the Gospel in a yet shorter formula, ‘From faith to faith.’

22. v. 16. *to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.* Just before, when thinking of Imperial Rome and its grandeur, and of the high spirit, which, perhaps, he might find in some of those to whom he is writing, as citizens of the world’s metropolis, he speaks of ‘Greeks and Barbarians’—he uses the Roman phrase for summing up all mankind. Now that he is coming to the religious question, well knowing that any believers in Christianity, whom he might find at Rome, either would be Jews by birth, or, if heathen by birth, would yet be thoroughly imbued by education, as proselytes, with

Jewish notions, St. Paul uses the Jewish formula, and speaks of Jew and Greek, the last being another word for Gentile, because Greek was the common language in those days, spoken by all the nations of the Mediterranean, in Europe, Asia, and Africa, with whom the Jews came in contact as traders.

23. v. 17. *the righteousness of God*, that is, the righteousness, or state of righteousness, which God gives graciously to man, as He gave to Abraham, when He called him righteous, who in himself was unrighteous, when He 'counted his faith to him for righteousness.' Let this be distinctly noted that, throughout this Epistle, the righteousness of God, or God's righteousness, means God's gift of righteousness—not God's own personal inherent righteousness or justice, not *God's way of justifying sinners*, of making them righteous, of giving them righteousness (which is by giving it to them in His Son), but the very righteousness itself—which God gives to men, so that by His free grace they stand before Him accepted and beloved,—*God's* righteousness, in short, opposed to *Man's* righteousness, to that which a man may fancy he can claim or work out for himself. The Jews prided themselves on having a righteousness of *their own*, a kind of special virtue, which gave them a claim to be considered the 'righteous people' of the earth, and in the strength of which they might stand boldly before God. That righteousness, according to their notion, they had partly inherited by their descent from 'righteous Abraham,' partly wrought out, or, at any rate, made sure for themselves, by conforming to the rite of circumcision and by their other ceremonial observances. And St. Paul had once been as confident as any of them as to the worth of this righteousness, and had reason to be so. 'If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more; circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews;' 'having profited in the Jews' religion above many mine equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of our fathers.' In short, 'as touching the righteousness which is in the law,' he was 'blameless.' Such righteousness as this, Man's righteousness, he had in perfection, if this could have served to give him righteousness before God. 'But what things were gain to me,' he says, 'those I counted loss for Christ, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things,' of such righteousness as this among the rest, 'and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having *mine own righteousness, which is of the Law*, but that which is through the faith of Christ, *the righteousness which is of God by faith*.'

This then is 'God's righteousness,' 'the righteousness of God,' of which so much is said in this Epistle, that which God gives us graciously to possess before Him, if we will meekly receive it at our Father's hands, as His

own gift, and not claim it as our right, by any merit of birth, or any desert of works. This 'righteousness of God,' thus thankfully received, as His own free gift, we may then call '*our righteousness*;' we may humbly and joyfully say, we *have* righteousness, we *are* righteous, before Him. It is the righteousness which He gives us, though in ourselves unrighteous, because He looks upon us in His Son. In virtue of this we stand before Him as His children, accepted in the Beloved. The glad tidings of the Gospel are these, that, though we neither have, nor can have, any righteousness of our own procuring, which we can dare to rest in, yet has God provided a righteousness for us, in which we may appear before Him. We must 'submit ourselves to God's righteousness,' instead of 'seeking to establish our own righteousness.' We must cast down before Him every proud, self-righteous thought and imagination; and, trembling with thankfulness, receive that righteousness, which He, of His own abounding grace, so freely gives us. So shall we be dealt with as righteous creatures, being *counted righteous* by Him, as Abraham was, because we meekly trust in Him—our faith being reckoned to us for righteousness, for His own Loving Mercy's sake, declared to us in His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

24. v. 17. *is being revealed in it.* This 'righteousness of God,'—this righteousness which comes from God,—which is the free gift of God—which (as he will presently say) God has given to the whole human race, before and after the coming of Christ,—is being 'revealed,' he says, that is, unveiled, in the Gospel. It is there already, in the mind of our Faithful Creator, in the heart of our Loving Father. The whole human race was redeemed from the curse of the Fall, in the counsels of Almighty Wisdom, from all eternity—the Lamb was slain 'from before the foundation of the world.' Adam and Noah and Abraham and David, yes, the whole family of man, in the ages gone by, 'good or evil,' 'just or unjust,' (in the ordinary sense of the words, though all were unjust in themselves before the eyes of the Most Holy,) were yet 'justified,' *made* just or righteous, dealt with as children, before any clear revelation was made of the way in which that righteousness was given to them. The tokens of God's favour have been shed abroad on the human race from the first. He 'gave them rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness.' He wrought by His Spirit on theirs, teaching men everywhere to 'feel after Him, if haply they might find Him, in whom they lived and moved and had their being, who was not far from any one of them.' But now in the Gospel is being revealed the secret of all this. There we are taught how God loved us in His Son, in whose image we are all made, who came in due time, as His Father's Wisdom willed it, to take our likeness, and bear away the sins of the world.

25. v. 17. *from faith unto faith*. The usual explanation of this expression is 'from one degree of faith to another.' The Apostle is understood to say that our convictions will be deepened from day to day upon the subject; we shall see more and more clearly, as we grow in grace, the revelation of 'God's righteousness' in the Gospel. This interpretation might be acquiesced in but for the very remarkable passage which occurs in iii. 21, 22, and which appears to be almost, in words, a resumption and expansion of the identical language of this verse, at the end of the intervening passage (i. 18—iii. 20), which has the appearance of a long *digression*, though it is not so in reality, as we shall presently see. On comparing the two passages (i. 17 and iii. 21, 22) the resemblance will be observed, even in the English version, and still more distinctly in the original Greek. And it will be seen that, in these latter two verses, the Apostle takes up again the thread of his argument in i. 17, which he has let go for a while, for a reason which will presently be stated. Comparing then the two passages, and using the expanded form of expression in iii. 21, 22, to help us in explaining the more condensed language in i. 17, we infer that, in the words 'to faith,' the abstract 'faith' is put for the concrete 'those that believe,' just as in chap. ii. the words 'circumcision' and 'uncircumcision' are used for the 'circumcised' and 'uncircumcised.' And thus St. Paul's meaning in this verse will appear to be this: '*For in it the righteousness of God is being revealed, (a righteousness arising) from, or out of, faith, (a righteousness extending) unto faith, that is, unto all them that believe.*' So Conybeare translates: 'a righteousness which springs from faith, and which faith receives.'

Let us compare now the words of iii. 21, 22, where this same formula is resumed. 'But now, apart from law, [of which he had been speaking in the digression] the righteousness of God has been manifested, (though being witnessed of by the law and the prophets,) but *the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ* (= from faith), *unto all* and upon all *them that believe* (= unto faith).'

In fact this verse, i. 17, is but a repetition in another form of the words just preceding, another summary of the whole subject which occupies his thoughts, and about which he means to write at full length, another way of stating the three Christian principles, which combat the three Jewish prejudices. Three times does the Apostle enunciate this summary, seeking to win access for it more and more, to drive it, as it were, into the hearts and minds of his readers.

26. v. 17. *the righteous shall live out of faith*. The Apostle merely quotes these words of the Prophet Habakkuk, as illustrating the position he had taken.



It is impossible not to notice the rhetorical ingenuity of his proceeding, how gradually and insensibly he leads on his Jewish readers, repeating twice the summary of the doctrine he wished to teach them, in different terms, so as to set it plainly before their eyes, but then passing on, before they can see all at once the full depth of its meaning, and meanwhile, in case any suspicious misgiving had begun to cross their minds, reassuring them by reminding them, how their own prophet Habakkuk wrote of old, 'The righteous man shall live out of, in consequence of, by reason of, faith.' Thus for the present they will be quieted with perceiving that, after all, what he had announced to them was only in accordance with what Habakkuk had taught. St. Paul, it is true, has gone further than the prophet in his statement. They will have, perhaps, a confused sense of this. They will feel that something more lies in his words than they had as yet distinctly realized. But they will be so far soothed that they will listen to him further, as with wonderful wisdom he leads them on after him to the admission of the first point, which he seeks to establish in their minds, namely, the conviction of sin, the sense of *their* needing (as well as the 'sinners of the Gentiles') 'the righteousness of God' which is 'revealed in the Gospel.'

## CHAP. I. 18—23.

(18) For the wrath of God from heaven is being revealed, upon every kind of impiety and iniquity of men, such as keep back the truth through iniquity. (19) Inasmuch as that which is knowable of God is manifest among them ; for God manifested it to them. (20) For His invisible *things*, from the creation of the world, being understood by his works, are being clearly seen, to wit, His Eternal Power and Deity, so that they are without excuse. (21) Inasmuch as, knowing God, they glorified Him not as God, nor gave thanks, but became silly in their reasonings, and their heart, wanting sense, became darkened. (22) Professing to be wise, they became fools ; (23) and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and flying, and four-footed, and creeping, things.

## NOTES.

27. v. 18. *the wrath of God is being revealed.* The Apostle enters now on his delicate task. The pious Jew at Rome, or Jewish proselyte, like Nicodemus of old, had no idea that he too, like any poor 'sinner of the Gentiles,' was by his natural birth under the curse, and needed God's forgiveness, God's righteousness. He must be brought to feel and acknowledge this, in the first place, or there will be no room for the Gospel of God's Love to enter in and possess his whole heart and being. How shall St. Paul draw him gently on to see and feel and confess this? He begins by announcing that God's universal dealings with mankind, and the secret voice of conscience, are ever testifying that there *is* a 'wrath of God,' as well as a 'righteousness of God,'—a wrath of God for *all wilful sin*, whether of Jew or Gentile. Such wrath is being daily and hourly *revealed* in one way or other, in the outward occurrences of life, in the inward utterances of man's spirit. There need be no doubt about it; this is being made plain to all, this is being revealed by tokens innumerable, that there is a Divine displeasure for all acts whatever, by whomsoever committed, of known wilful sin, for *every kind of impiety and iniquity of men, who keep back the truth through iniquity*, for all sin, which they commit with their eyes open to the evil of it.

Then, having thus made a general statement, which really involves the Jew as well as the Gentile, St. Paul does not apply it immediately to the former; but he takes his Jewish reader by guile, turns off his attention, as it were, for a while from what he is doing, and adroitly first carries him away with him to condemn the heathen sinning against light, which the Jew will very readily join him in doing. The Apostle's words glow, his heart swells, as he goes on. It seems as if he could not find language distinct and strong enough to bring the *heathen* under condemnation as sinners. Yet still it will be seen that he keeps the same point steadily before him throughout, before his own eyes and those of his readers, this, namely, that God's wrath is being revealed upon those who know what is right, yet, against their better light and knowledge, willingly and wilfully do what is wrong. Thus he speaks of those who 'keep back the truth through iniquity,'—who 'knowing God,' in some measure, yet 'do not glorify Him as God, nor are thankful,'—who deliberately 'change the truth of God,' of which their consciences tell them more or less clearly, 'into falsehood,'—who 'do not distinguish to *retain* God in knowledge,'—who, in short, 'know the righteous judgment of God, that those, who do such things, are worthy of death, yet both do them themselves, and encourage others to do them.' All these expressions are manifestly intended to include Jews as well as Gentiles, and, indeed, are framed with express reference to the for-

mer, though the Apostle does not yet unmask, as it were, his design, and his words seem to be bearing only upon the heathen world.

Thus far, doubtless, while condemning such sinners against their better light and knowledge among the heathen, he will have carried his Jewish reader along with him, borne away, as it were, unresisting, by the power of the truth, in the strong current of his vehement words. Then suddenly, with admirable abruptness, he stops short, brings up the Jew in a moment, turns round upon him, and asks, 'Well! and you, who are able to join so readily in passing judgment upon these, you, who know that such acts in a heathen are wrong,—I ask you, are they not wrong in a Jew also? Is it conceivable that God's wrath is being revealed for them only, and not much more for Jews, who, having more light than others, yet sin as they do? Can you imagine that there is any thing merely in a man's being a Jew, circumcised, a child of Abraham, that will screen him from the righteous judgment of God, if he does such things?' Of course, if he can bring them to see and admit that in any one single case, even of a wicked and profligate Jew, his supposed immunity from God's wrath cannot possibly be maintained, he will have introduced, as it were, the thin end of the wedge, and presently may push on his advantage to overthrow the whole structure of Judaism.

28. v. 18. *from heaven.* The Greek leaves it doubtful whether it should be rendered 'revealed from heaven,' or, 'the wrath of God from heaven.' The latter seems preferable: but this is immaterial to the general sense of the whole passage.

29. v. 18. *is being revealed, not is revealed.* It is being daily, hourly, constantly revealed, by the dealings of God with men, and especially by the secret witnessings of our own hearts. All men everywhere know in themselves that there is a Divine displeasure threatening those, who *do what they know to be wrong*, who 'keep back,' hold down, restrain, suppress, 'the truth through or in iniquity.'

30. v. 18. *all or every kind of impiety or iniquity.* This expression is meant by St. Paul (though his Jewish reader may not immediately perceive it) to include such acts both of Jew and Gentile. And, accordingly in ii. 9 he resumes, as it were, the statement in this verse, and expands these very words by saying (instead of 'wrath upon every kind of impiety or iniquity') 'indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh out evil, of the Jew first, and also of the (Greek) Gentile.'

31. v. 18. *impiety* or ungodliness, sin more directly against God; *iniquity* or unrighteousness, sin in our relations with men.

32. v. 18. *keep or hold back*, not merely *hold*, as in the English ver-

sion. This is the point on which he is insisting throughout the whole chapter, that men's consciences, as well as God's universal dealings with men, are revealing to them plainly enough the fact, that there is wrath, the wrath of God from His Holy Place, pronounced upon all wilful sin. But let it be observed that, in all which follows, St. Paul is not speaking of the certainty, that such wrath will be carried out into execution upon men—the heathen or others. All, that he is here aiming at, is to awaken in his readers the solemn conviction, that all acts of known and allowed sin must of themselves incur the displeasure of a Holy God, by whomsoever committed, and to arouse them to consider that all men, who have so sinned consciously, must necessarily have within them, in proportion to the strength of such consciousness, a secret misgiving and dread of God's wrath, the sense of sin which makes the sting of death, unless they hear of God's gracious, forgiving Love in the Gospel. Some, like young children, may have, indeed, very little of such consciousness—babes, for instance, none at all; the heathen may have more or less of it, according to circumstances. The Jew, devout and humble-minded, not possessed with the fond conceit of his own self-righteousness, would have a deep sense of the evil of sin, and be ready at times to pray with David, 'O Lord, rebuke me not in Thy wrath, neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure.' The Christian, who has had 'shed abroad in his heart the Love of God by the Holy Ghost which is given to us,' will feel more than any other the 'exceeding sinfulness of sin,' not the sin of infirmity and ignorance, but sin allowed and indulged, against the voice of conscience and the known will of his Lord. He will know that such sin is hateful and horrible,—that there must be 'wrath' upon it from the Holy and Blessed One. Thanks be unto God! one Love embraces all. Already, side by side with this revelation of God's wrath for wilful sin in the heart of man, there is a revelation of His Mercy—a secret sense that there is forgiveness with our Father in Heaven, in some way or other, possible or actual. The Jews, before the coming of Christ, had their system of sacrifices given them, to remind and assure them of this. The heathen had their various modes of quieting their hearts, with what served to them as a pledge of Divine Forgiveness. But all men, everywhere, have had all along, and still have, a belief in such Divine Forgiveness, as well as in such Divine Wrath upon wilful sin; they have a feeling that it must exist, it must somehow be provided for them. Nay, coupled with the very sense of sin, there is a dim sense of a righteousness which they already possess. In the very midst of their perverseness, they are conscious still that they are not dealt with as *accursed creatures*,—that, however He may see good to chasten and correct them, a Faithful Creator, a Merciful Father, is still pouring out His benefits upon them, 'making His

sun to rise on the evil and on the good, sending His rain on the just and on the unjust.' In the Gospel is explained the secret of this. For therein is revealed the righteousness which God gives us,—which He gives to all, the evil and the good, the just and the unjust alike, that we may be regarded as children before Him—undutiful and disobedient children, it may be,—self-willed and prodigal,—but children still, and to be dealt with as children, even when He visits us with His displeasure—children who have been called to inherit a blessing, and are not lying under a curse.

33. v. 19. *that which is knowable*, that which may be attained by human faculties, enlightened by the Divine Spirit, without special revelation.

34. v. 19. *manifested*, not *hath manifested*, as if some full complete work of manifestation had been wrought among them. The tense used in the Greek is the aorist, and it implies 'God has manifested it from time to time, *it* manifests, and will manifest.' In fact, the Greek aorist can often be expressed best by one of the forms of the English present, 'God manifests it,' which English expression does not point to any one particular time, past, present, or to come, or to any continually progressing manifestation, but implies the frequently recurring acts in all time by which God manifests His Glory to men.

35. v. 20. *His invisible things, &c.* As St. Paul has said elsewhere, though we cannot see God with our bodily eyes, yet has He so made us that we may 'feel after Him and find Him,' and see His Glory and Beauty with our spiritual eyes; 'for He is not far from any one of us.'

36. v. 20. *they are without excuse.* The recognition of the Eternal Power and Deity of our glorious Maker involves, as a natural and necessary consequence, the duty of fearing, loving, trusting, and obeying Him, in proportion to the Light He gives us.

But *who* are 'without excuse'? St. Paul cannot mean here to say that every individual heathen was without excuse, any more than afterwards he means to say that every individual heathen was 'given over to a reprobate mind,' so as to do all manner of abominable wickedness. Of course, there were infants and young children, at all events, of whom this could not be said. There were others also, the wise and good of ancient Greece and Rome, and, doubtless, of every nation under heaven, civilised or barbarian, who did, as St. Paul says himself presently (ii. 10), 'work that which was good,' according to the light and strength vouchsafed to them. There were those, in fact, who did discern something of the Divine Glory from the works of God; and were thankful. 'This I esteem real piety,' wrote the heathen Galen, 'not that I should sacrifice thousands and thousands of hecatombs of His bulls, and offer up cassia and ten thousand other odours as incense; but, first, that I should myself understand Him, and then ex-

plain to others what He is, as to Wisdom, as to Power, and as to Benignity. To will to adorn this whole world, and to leave nothing destitute of His Goodness, I lay down as a proof of perfect Benignity, and therefore He is to be praised by us as Good. But to discover how this may be best adorned, is the height of Wisdom. And to effect whatever He hath chosen, is evidence of irresistible Power.' *De Natura*, II. 60. Such words alone are enough to show that St. Paul must be understood as speaking of heathens generally, not individually, even as David in the Psalm, which is quoted in iii. 10—18, is speaking of the general depravity of the people in his time, not of each individual among them, child or adult, when he says, 'There is not one righteous, no, not one . . . . The poison of asps is under their lips: their feet are swift to shed blood.'

The Apostle's saying they are 'without excuse,' however, is not the same as saying that the 'wrath of God' will come down upon them to the uttermost (as some seem to think). We, Christians, are 'without excuse' for sins which we daily commit; we too are 'under sentence to God,' for such things; but we trust to be forgiven, we trust that we are forgiven, and are still able to appear as 'righteous' creatures before Him, notwithstanding all our faults, because He looks upon us in His Son, in whom He has loved the world. And we believe that our King and Lord, the righteous Judge, will deal mercifully as well as justly with us in that day. So too, we may be sure, will He deal with the heathen. Probably their worst sins of murder and uncleanness are not more essentially abominable in God's sight than the slanderous talk, and malicious acts, and dishonest practices, and self-indulgent, selfish lives, of many Christians, whom He alone can judge, who knows the secrets of all hearts, and the share of His goods committed unto each—and not we. Let it be then distinctly noted that what the Apostle is here driving at is not to announce that all the heathen world without exception are without excuse, and shall be doomed to eternal perdition. But he says that all such among the heathen, as shut their eyes wilfully or heedlessly to the Light, which they have vouchsafed to them, and, having powers and faculties for discerning some measure of the truth, neglect or refuse to use it, but 'keep back the truth through iniquity,'—(all heathens do not this, as heathen children, and doubtless a multitude of simple souls beside them,)—are 'without excuse,' and fall directly under the condemnation, that 'Light is come into the world, but they loved darkness rather than the light, because they knew in themselves that their deeds were evil.' He goes on then to say how continuance in such evil tends more and more to darken the heart, and ultimately speaks of the heathen world generally as doing what they knew to be wrong, and encouraging even others to do the same. But the whole

spirit of the passage is *not* to announce that these heathen will be *punished* for their sin, (however this may be,) but to make it plain that such conduct is sin, and subject to *God's wrath*, and that, consequently, they need the manifestation of a righteousness, which shall be God's, God's Gift to them as sinners, and not their own, if they are to have any part in His Kingdom of Light and Love. As for the better part among the heathen, they would, like devout, humble-minded Jews, or Christians, be ready enough to confess their own shortcomings of the standard of goodness, which they had set up for themselves. The *general* statement was true for them, as for others, that they too were 'concluded under sin,' and had need of God's mercy and God's righteousness; though the strong language of St. Paul in this chapter could not, and was not meant to, apply to them, any more than to young children or lunatics, who had yet within them by nature the seeds of spiritual death, and were equally (as he will show hereafter) 'concluded under sin.'

37. v. 21. *their heart*, because *wanting sense* to understand what was every day before their very eyes, *was darkened*. 'He that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.'

38. v. 23. *professing to be wise*. St. Paul appears to have had in view especially the sophists of Greece, to whom, in his own age, four or five centuries before, the heathen philosopher, Socrates, that 'hunter of the truth,' so resolutely opposed himself, and died, in fact, at their hands, a martyr in the service of the God of Truth.

39. v. 23. *they became fools*. These wise and learned of the earth, yet, generally speaking, were content with the idolatrous worship of the times, and, with all their wisdom, could not see that, if we are God's offspring, He cannot be likened to a bird or beast, or made in the image of a corruptible man.

## CHAP. I. 24—27.

(24) Wherefore also God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts unto uncleanness, to dishonour their own bodies among themselves; (25) Such as changed the truth of God into falsehood, and revered and did *religious* service to the creature instead of the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. (26) Therefore God gave them over to dishonourable passions. For both their females changed the natural use into that which is beyond nature; (27) and like-

wise the males also, leaving the natural use of the woman, were burnt up in their desire towards one another, males in males working out uncleanness, and the reward which was fitting of their error receiving back in themselves.

## NOTES.

40. v. 24. *God gave them over.* In Eph. iv. 19, St. Paul speaks of the heathen as 'having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts, who, being past feeling, have *given themselves over* unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.' Of course, as before, this is not true of *all* heathens. The Apostle is speaking of the general aspect of the heathen world, especially in his own time, and within his own knowledge.

But here we have the same double form of expression as in the Book of Exodus, where *God* is sometimes said to have hardened Pharaoh's heart, at another time *Pharaoh* is said to have hardened his own heart. Such words as these point to the laws of the moral world, as sure and stable as those of the physical, which make the darkening of the mind, and the hardening of the heart, the natural and necessary consequence of continuance in *known* evil. It *must* be so. The laws of the physical world, we believe, are fixed by the Creator, who gave to the different elements their different powers. A man cannot put his finger in the fire without being burnt, or drink spirits to excess without injury, or swallow prussic acid without his life being sacrificed. We may say, in all such cases, that *the man* did so and so—he burnt his finger, *he* impaired his powers of digestion, *he* killed himself by taking poison. Yet, in reality, it was *God's* minister, acting by God's law, that did it; it was the fire that burnt, the alcohol that corroded, the poison that killed. It is, therefore, God Himself, to whom these results must be ultimately attributed; and the man's rashness, intemperance, desperation, have brought upon him these consequences from the Hand of the Almighty, according to the laws which He has fixed for the physical world. Other laws, it is true, which God has also fixed, may be brought into play by the action of the man himself or of others, to prevent the former having their full effect, in producing such consequences. He may so quickly draw back his hand as not to be burnt; he may be drawn from his sottish habits before the evil is irremediable; he may have an antidote administered in time. But the natural consequence of his act is fixed beforehand by the Will and Wisdom of God.



The man can foretel it to himself, that, following such and such a course, he will bring on himself, that is, the Almighty Ruler of the Universe will bring on him, such and such consequences.

Just such an order there is also in the moral world, with only this difference, that the consequence here is not merely necessary by the fiat of the Almighty, but necessary, as it seems to us, in the very nature of things—in the very nature of His own Eternal Being. It is the Law of the Moral World, that known, indulged sin of any kind *must* be followed with this particular form of evil, the darkening of the mind, the hardening of the heart. How far the sins of any man, of any heathen or Christian—the sins of uncleanness, deceit, malignity, covetousness, pride, vanity, envy, selfishness—are sins of ignorance, or sins committed against light by those who know better, *we* cannot say. He only knows who knows the heart. The 'sins of ignorance' God 'winks at.' But where a man, heathen, Jew, or Christian, 'keeps back the truth through iniquity,' 'changes God's truth into falsehood,' knows how to do right, and yet chooses to do wrong, saying, 'Evil, be thou my Good,'—when any man lives thus, whether in Christian or heathen lands,—there will the work of death be assuredly going on in his soul, and we may say of him, either that he has delivered himself over unto evil, or God has delivered him. Here, however, as before, other laws of the moral world may be brought into play, through the mercy of God, by which such a man may be rescued from such evil, before the work of death is wrought in him, effectually, for ever.

41. v. 25. *such as changed the truth, &c.* Let this be noted distinctly once more. Throughout this whole passage St. Paul is straining at this point only,—not to bring the whole of heathendom under condemnation, to 'conclude them all under sin,' (he does that afterwards,)—but for the present his argument only requires that he should lead on the Jew to confess, that, whatever might be the case with those who sinned ignorantly, yet, for those who did not sin ignorantly, who changed the truth which they knew, or should have known, into a lie, there is wrath 'revealed' from a Holy and Righteous God. This, and this alone, is what he is aiming at in this chapter. And then he will turn presently round upon the Jew and ask him, if he really can suppose that there is no condemnation for those, who know more than all the heathen, yet sin in direct opposition to their knowledge, in direct defiance of the judgment, which they admit readily, in the case of others, such sin would deserve. He means to set before them this solemn truth, that the very knowledge of God's Law, which they possessed, so far from being something to boast of, a kind of charm, as it were, to secure them from His Wrath and admit them to His Kingdom, would be the measure of their condemnation, if they were not

found to walk according to the truth which they knew. He will then go on to show that, if this 'charm' of their Jewish immunity is broken in the case of some, it is broken for all: they have nothing to trust in, any more than the rest of the human kind, but the mercies of God. And he will further warn them, as he draws towards the close of his argument, that if they do not feel this to be true—if the Jewish nation, as a whole, still continues wrapt up in a senseless conceit of their own dignity and security, self-satisfied and confident at having been 'raised up,' as if they must 'stand' for ever, and could not 'fall,'—it may be that by long continuance in known evil, *their* eyes have become dark, and *their* hearts hard, even as those of these ignorant and besotted heathen.

42. v. 26. *dishonourable passions*. In the present condition of a heathen or any other people, it is not for us to say how much of their present moral debasement is the result of a judicial debasement of the kind here spoken of, and is to be regarded in the light of a penal consequence of their 'keeping back the truth through iniquity.'

Let us take, for instance, the case of the Zulus. We know that they exhibit certain virtues, and are capable of brave and kind and just and generous actions. But we know also that they practise habitually, without any restraint, a certain gross form of vice, that they kill for trivial causes, sometimes, apparently, for none at all. Is the moral guiltiness of these offences to be measured by the high standard of pure Christianity? Again and again, in Zululand, some wretch is knocked on the head as an *umtakati*, or evil-doer, supposed by certain occult practices, to plot against the lives of the king and the royal family or others, just as wizards and witches were believed to do not long ago—perhaps are still believed to do—in some Christian lands. Are we able to measure the guilt, in the sight of God, of such matters, when we remember how short a time has passed, since even in England, with all the light of Christianity, and all the help of learning, and all the benefits of English civilisation, such a truly good and pious man as Judge Hale could condemn a supposed witch to be burnt to death, and believe that, in so doing, he was acting according to the will of God, and not merely according to the law? Such things as these we must leave to the righteous Judge of all the earth, who will assuredly do what is right. Where a Zulu chief butchers out of mere spite or covetousness, desiring to wreak his vengeance or increase his herds, and fighting thus with his own conscience, (if he has not already silenced and deadened it,) there, doubtless, will the work of death go on within, the mind will become still more darkened, the heart still further hardened in evil. And so with other corrupt practices. So far as these are now carried on, or were at first begun, in ignorance of a higher law, after the example of parents, and in obedience to those in authority, who stood in the place of God, they are

the sins of ignorance, which God 'winks at,' till His word is brought home to them—not merely to their outward ears by the stammering lips of a missionary, but inwardly to their hearts by His Spirit, teaching them to know and feel that such acts are evil in His sight, and bidding them forsake them, and live as becomes His children. But, whenever men, knowing God and the righteous requirements of His Law in some measure, yet 'glorify him not as God,' and refuse to listen to His Voice, which speaks within them—whenever men strive with their Heavenly Friend and Teacher, and 'do not obey the truth, but yield themselves up to iniquity'—there is 'anger and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh out evil, be he Jew or Greek, Christian or Heathen.'

St. Paul, then, in the language of this chapter is not speaking of all heathen indiscriminately, and certainly does not mean to describe all such men as Socrates and Cicero, with a multitude of other great and noble men among the heathen—at all events not their young children—as being 'filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, &c.' He is referring to individual cases in all times,—(as, in fact, is indicated by the use of the Greek aorist),—and especially to the numerous instances of flagrant vice, which in that corrupt age would be too familiarly known to those living at Rome, or in any of the great cities of the Empire. And so he carries his reader easily along with him, while he reiterates again and again—four times, in fact, in different forms of expression, (as if to drive the thought well into their minds,)—the natural and necessary consequence of continuance in known and allowed evil—that consequence being a further sinking into evil, a hardening of the heart, a deadening of the conscience, a darkening of the mind, an increasing inability to discern right from wrong, the good from the evil. His words, however, seem to imply a very general and widespread depravity of this kind. In chapter ii. he allows, indeed, that there are men, Greeks as well as Jews, who, 'by patient continuance in well-doing, do seek for glory, and honour, and immortality'—who do 'work good'—who 'having not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, and are a law unto themselves.' How many there were, God only could know. But, to the Apostle's mind, the general aspect of the heathen world would seem to be that exhibited by the language of this first chapter. And, indeed, the Satires of Juvenal, and the Histories of Tacitus, give a very similar account of the profligacy of the times, while yet everywhere giving tokens of the shining of some bright lights to illumine the gloom, in the lives of noble individuals whose acts are recorded for the admiration of all ages, and, doubtless, in the lives of a multitude of other humbler souls, whose names are registered in heaven.

How much of guilt, of moral guilt, there was in all this, God only can know. But the Apostle teaches, what the Bible everywhere teaches, and our own hearts teach also, that the essence of moral guilt consists in the commission of acts of *conscious wilful sin*, whether sin of negligence or sin of presumption. The sins of mere infirmity, the sins of mere ignorance, as well as the sinful stain which infects our nature, St. Paul teaches, and the Bible everywhere teaches, are forgiven freely by our Heavenly Father, for His own Name's sake, declared to us in Jesus Christ our Lord. But St. Paul teaches, and the Bible teaches, and our own consciences teach us, that the sins which do weigh down the soul, which do naturally and necessarily tend to defile, darken, deaden, and destroy it, are the sins committed in disregard of that measure of light which has been vouchsafed, and which still remains, and, however dimmed, is perhaps never wholly extinguished in any man on this side the grave. What may be the consequences, in another world, of having abused the gift of God in this, and having become daily worse and more corrupt by continuance in known evil, instead of becoming better, as we shall become, by abiding in that which our consciences tell us is right and good, St. Paul does not tell us. He only implies that such men among the heathen in their measure, like the Jews themselves, or like Christians who may do likewise, 'after their hardness and impenitence of heart are treasuring up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man *according to his deeds*'—an awful, indeed, but yet a grand and blessed and comforting truth, to which our own hearts fully respond, for which the '*nations* may rejoice and be glad; for He cometh—He cometh to judge righteously the earth.' Not for the sins of Adam, or the sins of infirmity and ignorance, which Adam's sin may have been the cause of in any man, but for his own wilful, known, conscious tampering with the truth, will he be judged in that day,—because, whether Jew or Greek, Christian or Heathen, the light came to him (in what measure God only can know); but he 'loved the darkness rather than the Light, because his deeds were evil.'

43. vv. 24, 26. *God gave them over.* Here, as everywhere throughout the passage, the tense used is the aorist,—not 'God has given them over,' as a settled thing, once for all, permanently and hopelessly; but He 'gave them over,' in each case, on each occasion, when the evil work was done, which drew on this consequence.

So God 'gave over' the Jews at various times,—not, indeed, *all* the nation at any time, not the 'seven thousand chosen men, who had not bowed the knee to Baal' in each case, but the great mass of the people. He gave them over again and again to a reprobate mind for a season;

though by various means and merciful acts of His Providence, He raised them again, from time to time, from their state of spiritual degradation; until *they gave themselves over* at last—the great body of them, not all—or *God gave them over* (for a time only, as St. Paul tells us in xi. 25,) into that perverse state of mind, in which they rejected and crucified the Lord of Glory. We know that many of them must have wilfully shut their eyes to the Light, ascribing to Satan what was manifestly done by the Spirit of God, and putting to death, as a malefactor, One, whom they saw and knew to be pure, and loving, and innocent. Others, doubtless, even in that age, did what they did, ‘ignorantly,’ as St. Peter says of them,—‘ignorantly in unbelief,’ as St. Paul says of himself,—believing that they were doing God service, led away by the example and teaching of their betters.

But, as for the Jews of the present day, we cannot presume to say that they too have been ‘given over to a reprobate mind,’ or that their eyes are darkened as a penal consequence of their continuing in unbelief. It may be so in certain individual cases, where light has reached the inner man, and been rejected. But, probably, in our days, amidst the great body of the Jewish people, such cases are very rare. It is far more likely that the acts of abominable cruelty, injustice, and contemptuous bigotry, with which, in Christian lands and by Christian people—too often, alas! by Christian ministers—they have been so frequently, and are even now, treated, have gone far to fix them in holy and righteous horror of a religion, which taught that such outrages were right. All, surely, that an humble-minded Christian can allow himself to say of the present state of the Jews generally, is that they are, not actually incurring great moral *guilt*—(he cannot judge of that,)—but suffering great moral and spiritual loss from the acts of their forefathers.

Just as if an English parent should commit some great breach of the laws, and be transported to a penal settlement, and, settling there in after days, should draw his family around him, removing them thus from the means of grace and opportunities of spiritual growth, which they would have enjoyed in England, and which he himself is unable to supply. The probability,—we might say certainty,—is that the children in such a case would suffer great *loss* in spiritual things through the fault of the parent, though they can only incur *guilt* through fault of their own. They would serve, in fact, to illustrate the words of the second commandment, that the ‘iniquity of the fathers is visited upon the children unto the third and fourth generations.’ But the ‘visitation’ here spoken of is not *punishment*, laid upon them for their fathers’ sins. ‘The soul, that sinneth, it shall die.’ Frequently, indeed, such ‘visitation’ upon the children is turned into a positive blessing, both to the fathers and to them. The sense of the con-

sequences which he is entailing, by his guilty course of life, upon those whom he loves, may act as a check upon the parent in the commission of sin. If not, it may deepen his sorrow and repentance, and inspire *them*, at all events, with a salutary dread and abhorrence of that, which has ruined him, and brought so much evil upon them all. In this way, however, it can be easily seen how a family may sink into a lower state of spiritual life than the parents, without incurring moral guiltiness thereby, if they have not been consciously concerned in the acts which led to it. And their children may sink lower still.

Thus we can conceive of the present state of the great body of the Jewish nation, as being in most cases the consequence, mainly, if not altogether, of the sins of their forefathers, without being in the least degree able to judge how much of the guilt of that state belongs to themselves, or how much of it belongs, rather, to us Christians, who have failed to let our light shine to the glory of our God before them. So too, in looking at a heathen people like the Zulus, we can conceive how they have sunk down gradually from that knowledge, which the fathers of all the Kafir tribes once possessed, as sons (very probably) or grandsons of Abraham, to the mere trace which they now have of that knowledge, in the recognition of one Supreme Creator,—whom they call uNkulunkulu, the Great-Great-One, or uMvelinqange, the first Out-Comer, but whom they will often confuse with the first created man,—without being in the least able to judge to what extent the living people of the tribe are involved in the guilt of such declension. It is enough for us to know that, whatever these brother-men may suffer, however they may be degraded and debased, whatever loss of moral or spiritual life they may experience through the sins of the generations which have gone before them, that measure of light which every one has had vouchsafed to him, will not be withdrawn or darkened, except through his own acts of conscious evil. Let it be repeated once more, there is now no condemnation but this for any member of the redeemed race of man, that ‘light has come to him,’ according to the measure of the gift of God; but he ‘loved the darkness rather than the light, because his deeds were evil.’

44. v. 27. *receiving back in themselves* from God the just consequences of their evil doing, in the darkening of the mind, &c.

#### CHAP. I. 28—32.

(28) And, as they did not distinguish to hold God *in their minds* with intelligence, God gave them over unto a reprobate mind, to do things unseemly; (29)

filled with all iniquity, fornication, knavery, greed, viciousness; crammed with envy, hatred, strife, deceit, spitefulness; whisperers, (30) backbiters, God-haters, insolent, haughty, braggarts, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, (31) senseless, perfidious, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful; (32) such as, knowing well the righteous decision of God, that those doing such things are worthy of death, not only do them, but even consent to those who do them.

## NOTES.

45. v. 28. *reprobate*, that is, worthless, like drossy gold, rejected by the assayer, refuse. The play of words in the original Greek is lost in the English translation. It may be partially expressed by translating (with Dr. Vaughan), 'As they *refused* to hold God intelligently, God gave them over to a *refuse* mind.'

46. v. 29. *hatred*. The Greek word means literally 'murder,' but appears to be used here in the sense of 'hatred.'

47. v. 30. *inventors of evil things*, that is, of new forms of evil, new vices, or vicious practices. 'Five of the terms here applied to the heathen world (and in substance several others) are found in 2 Tim. iii. 2, 3, in the predicted corruption of the Church itself.' *Vaughan*. It was, of course, part of the Apostle's stratagem, as it were, to include, among the grosser sins of the heathen, sins of a more ordinary kind, which were too often committed by Jews as well.

48. v. 32. *knowing well the righteous decision of God*—knowing it, of course, without revelation, in the secrets of their own hearts. The Apostle is not here speaking, we see, of infants, young children, insane persons &c., who may do things evil without knowing that they are evil; nor, by analogy, is he speaking of others, who, though old in years, are as children in understanding, with regard to much that they do, and of whom there must be a multitude among the heathen. His argument does not require him to speak of these. He is here only speaking of those, who deliberately do what they know to be wrong, and justly incur a corresponding judgment.

49. v. 32. *not only do them, but even consent to those who do them*. The guilt incurred by those, who, knowing a thing to be wrong, not only do it, but encourage others to do it, or even look on complacently and consenting, while others do it, is double-dyed. A man may be overtaken by

temptation, and sin in his own person, while actually condemning his own act, and loathing himself while he commits it. But to look on with anything like pleasure or concurrence, while another is committing it, implies that he has deliberately taken part with evil.

## CHAP. II. 1—10.

(1) Wherefore thou art without excuse, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest ; for, whilst thou art judging the other, thou condemnest thyself ; for thou, that art judging, doest the same things. (2) Now, we know that the judgment of God is according to truth upon those doing such things. (3) But dost thou calculate this, O man, thou that judgest those doing such things and doest them, that thou shalt wholly escape the judgment of God ? (4) Or dost thou make light of the riches of His Goodness and Forbearance and Long-suffering, not perceiving that the Goodness of God is leading thee to repentance ? (5) But after thy hardness and impenitent heart dost thou treasure for thyself wrath in the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God ? (6)—who will give back to each according to his deeds ; (7) to those, who with endurance in well-doing are seeking glory and honour and immortality, Life Eternal ; (8) while for those of party-spirit, and disobedient to the truth, but yielding themselves up to iniquity, *there is* indignation and wrath ; (9) tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that worketh out evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek ; (10) but glory, and honour, and peace, to every one that worketh good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.



## NOTES.

49. v. 1. *thou art without excuse.* The Apostle, having carried his Jewish reader along with him, while he brings under 'God's wrath'—not the heathen, bodily and universally, (he will speak of them afterwards,) but those among them who, knowingly and wilfully practise the abominable things of which he had been speaking,—such as 'knew in themselves the judgment of God,' declared against such things, yet 'not only did them, but consented to those who did them,'—now turns sharply round upon the Jew himself, and asks, if he can possibly doubt that the same, or a heavier, judgment must light upon a vicious Jew—not, again, upon the Jews, bodily and universally, (he will speak of them also afterwards,) but upon such as practised the very sins, which they condemned in others, or other like sins. He wants, in fact, as has been said before, to introduce, as it were, 'the small end of the wedge,' and then afterwards he will strike it home, in the case of both Jew and Gentile. The idea was so new and strange to the Jewish mind of that day, that they were to be treated just like the Gentiles, or rather dealt with more severely, as their privileges had been so much greater, but treated by one and the same righteous law, *according to their lives*, 'according to their deeds,'—not treated with special favouritism, sheltered and screened from wrath, because of their descent from Abraham, their knowledge of the law, their practice of circumcision,—that St. Paul judiciously adopts this course, in order to set before the mind of his pious reader, whether a Jew or Roman proselyte, the startling result, to which his Jewish theory would carry him. That result would be no other than this, that an utterly vicious, though enlightened, Jew would be wholly exempted from feeling the weight of that wrath, which, as his own conscience told him, was declared from the God of Heaven against all wilful sin, and which he readily admitted to be deserved in the case of the vicious, but ignorant, Gentile. He wishes to make him stagger, as it were, at being brought face to face with such a conclusion as this, and to begin to question whether, after all, the great principle of Judaism was so irrefragably true. At all events, he will thus prepare him to listen more attentively to what he will now go on to say.

For it is certain that St. Paul could not possibly mean that the pious people at Rome to whom he was writing, were 'doing these same things,' while they condemned others. Whatever faults they were still committing daily, through the infirmity of the flesh, yet he would not surely think of speaking of them, as persons who habitually committed 'theft,' 'adultery,' or 'sacrilege,' through whom 'the name of God was blasphemed among the heathen,' any more than, in the first chapter, he would have spoken of

the great and good among the heathen, as 'being filled with all iniquity, fornication, uncleanness, &c.' All, that he wishes at this point to do, is to shake the fixed prejudice of his readers, as to the point of the Jew's immunity from judgment and wrath, only because he is a circumcised child of Abraham. If he can do this in the case of some, he can do it for all; he can bring them to confess that every Jew, even the most pious, must lie under 'sentence to God.' If he can bring them to feel that a *wicked* Jew must be subject to 'wrath' as well as other men, he can then bring home the pure and holy Law of God to the tender heart and conscience of the most faithful believer, convincing him too of his need of 'righteousness'—a righteousness, which his Jewish privileges cannot give him, which he cannot work out for himself in any way, which must be the free gift of God's Love, and which he must be willing to receive, with humility and thankfulness, like any poor ignorant heathen. In short, setting out with the statement, (which he assumes to need no proof, for the truth of it is manifest to the consciences of men, and in God's general dealings with mankind,) that the 'wrath of God' is revealed upon all *wilful and conscious sin*, he will come, at last, to conclude the whole world, Jew as well as Gentile, under sin—to show that they are all under *judgment*, though not all under *wrath*—that they all, therefore, need this 'righteousness' which is revealed in the Gospel, as God's free gift to men, to the whole human race, in order that, possessing it, they may be able to stand and rejoice before Him as their Judge.

Turning then, as the Apostle does, so sharply upon his reader at the beginning of this chapter, he takes for granted that he will feel, at once, the real point of his question. The pious Jew will see that the argument does, indeed, indirectly, and most vitally, concern himself, inasmuch as what is true for great transgressions must be true in a measure for all. But yet he will see this through the outward form of the question, and will allow the Apostle to argue on, understanding of himself that the strong words used, however implicitly they may involve him also, are not meant directly to apply to *every Jew*, such as himself, or, indeed, to any one in particular, but to any man whatsoever, Jew or Gentile, who condemns another for doing such things, showing thereby that he knows that they are wrong in themselves, and yet does them.

50. v. 1. *whosoever*. With this word he begins to drag in the Jew; 'whosoever, whether child of Abraham or not.'

51. v. 1. *that judgest*—that hast gone along with me in all that I have said, about the 'wrath of God' being 'revealed' upon all those among the *heathen*, who 'keep back the truth through iniquity.'

52. v. 1. *whilst*, not 'wherein,' E. V. This is a very common use

of the Greek phrase here translated; see Mark ii. 19, Luke v. 34, John v. 7.

53. v. 1. *thou condemnest thyself.* 'You show that you have a light to guide you, a knowledge of what is right by the very power you exercise of judging others. Therefore, doing the same things yourself, *you*, certainly (whatever may be true of those others), are sinning against the light, and are "without excuse," even as you agreed with me in saying (i. 20) that *they* are "without excuse."

54. v. 2. *we know that the judgment of God is according to truth.* He is referring to what he had said in the former chapter, in which he supposes his reader to have fully agreed with him. 'We know,—we are sure, from reason and conscience, as well as revelation,—we have no doubt—we admit, in fact, in respect of those heathens, that God will judge "according to the truth," according to the actual facts of the case, rendering to every man according to his deeds, and not according to what he may think or fancy. Will He not, think you, judge "according to truth" in the case of the Jew also, not according to his own mistaken notion of his birthright and peculiar privileges?'

55. v. 3. *wholly escape.* This gives better the force of the Greek; 'clean escape,' not merely 'escape,' as in the E. V.

56. v. 4. *or dost thou make light of the riches of His Goodness, &c.* 'Or art thou so taken up with high notions of thine own dignity and security, as a child of Abraham, that thou regardest as a light thing God's exceeding mercy, that He bears so long with you, still seeking that you should repent and live?' The Apostle asks two questions: (1) Dost thou think that thou shalt *altogether* escape judgment? (2) If not, then art thou still presuming on thy supposed state of favour, and making light of the mercy, which gives thee time and opportunity for forsaking thy evil deeds?

57. v. 4. *is for leading.* This form of expression is often required to give proper force to the Greek Present. We shall find other instances of it in this Epistle.

58. v. 4. *to repentance.* He seems to be here just hinting at that which he suggests more distinctly afterwards, namely, that the long continuance of the Jewish nation, in the enjoyment of extraordinary blessings, was no sign that any individual member of it, or the nation as a whole, was to be exempt from God's righteous judgment, by any special act of favouritism. On the contrary, what if the Great Husbandman has been all the while digging and manuring, if haply He may find fruit at the last?

59. v. 6. *who will render to each according to his deeds.* This is the point, which the Apostle must reiterate again and again, that all will be

judged according to their deeds. The Jew will not be treated with any favouritism. On the contrary, having received so much more than others, so much the more will be required of him. The Apostle is seeking to shatter by repeated blows, in all manner of ways, this fond notion of their being *favourites* with God,—their having grace given them above others for some special merit in themselves, or on account of their extraction—which he knew would sap all the life out of their Christianity.

60. v. 7. *with endurance in well doing*, not 'by endurance &c.' E. V., as if these sought glory, &c., *by* their deeds. The Greek implies that they pursued their course of goodness, not as the means to a certain end, but as the course which was right in itself, pursuing which, however, they believed also that they should attain the end of their soul's desire.

61. v. 7. *endurance*, not merely 'patience,' or 'patient continuance.' The Greek word is expressed better by 'endurance,' which implies 'continuance under hardship or difficulty.'

62. v. 7. *Life Eternal*. This, then, is the reward which God gives to all, who endure in well-doing, '*seeking* glory and honour and immortality,' that is, *consciously aiming* at higher things than those of time and sense, and so evidencing that their hearts are already in some measure quickened with spiritual life. Seeking thus, they shall find supplied to them, even in this life, the living bread and the living water, which their souls really longed for. They shall have vouchsafed to them some knowledge of Him, whom to know *is* Life Eternal. And that shall be a pledge and a foretaste of yet fuller joys to come.

63. v. 8. *to those of party-spirit*. The Greek word here translated 'party-spirit,' has been confounded by our translators with another somewhat like it, which means 'contention.' The same word occurs in Phil. i. 16, ii. 3, in both which passages it means as here, 'party-spirit,' and it is never used for 'contention' or 'strife,' simply. In Phil. ii. 3, it is coupled with 'vain-glory;' and the compound expression completely describes the proud, self-confident, exclusiveness, of the Jew, who professed, indeed, to know God and to teach others to know Him, but, instead of seeking true glory and honour and immortality, the praise which cometh from God, in faithfulness of daily life, sought only to glorify himself and his nation, as the special favourites of God, the only people who were permitted to know Him. They made religion a *party* thing for their own exaltation; while, at the same time, living ungodly lives, and dishonouring God among the heathen.

64. v. 8. *disobedient to the truth*—that is, the truth, the true and right so far as they know it—that which has been revealed to them of the truth,

with more or less of fulness and clearness—consciously disobedient to the truth, and willingly complying with falsehood.

65. v. 8. *yielding themselves*. The Greek word is in the middle voice, and expresses that the *will* goes with the deed, that they give themselves up to iniquity.

66. v. 8. *there is indignation and wrath*. The construction of the sentence is here changed in the Greek, ('Life Eternal' being in the accusative case, 'indignation and wrath' in the nominative,) perhaps, because these latter words did not well suit the foregoing verb. God *gives* 'Eternal Life;' but He cannot so well be said to *give* 'indignation and wrath.'

67. v. 9. *every soul of man*, that is 'every person,' as in xii. 1.

68. v. 9. *worketh out evil*, with a will, resolutely, abandoning himself to it, *fulfilling* the lusts of the flesh, instead of fighting with them; but v. 10, *worketh good*, (the Greek word is different,) because, at the best, we cannot so fully work out the good as we may the evil. It should be noticed that St. Paul speaks of this 'tribulation and anguish,' not for the soul of every man that *worketh* evil, (for that even good men may do at times,) but that *worketh out* evil.

69. v. 9. *and also of the Greek*, that is, of the heathen, not merely the *believing* Greek or Gentile, as is plain, both from the Apostle's whole argument, and from his going on to speak of men 'doing by nature the work of the Law,' who 'have no revelation, but are a law to themselves.'

70. v. 10. *glory, and honour, and peace, to every one that worketh good*. In the former words, v. 7, where he spoke of men '*seeking* glory, and honour, and immortality,' he appears to have had in view devout and earnest minds of a higher class, whether Jews or converts from among the Gentiles to Judaism or Christianity, or such as Socrates, Cicero, and others, who eagerly 'felt' after God amidst the darkness of heathenism, and so had been graciously permitted in their measure to 'find' Him. To these men, who were consciously seeking after higher blessings than this life could give, he says, God will give that highest transcendent gift, Eternal Life. But now he speaks of others, not so highly gifted or privileged as these, and he uses more comprehensive language. He wishes to embrace the faithful and true of heart of every kind, all those who 'work good,' whether Jew or Greek—all that are obedient to that measure of the truth which has been revealed to them, however small it may be,—those who 'do by nature the things of the Law,' who 'do justice, and love mercy, and walk humbly with their God,' according to the light vouchsafed to them. Who or how many there may be, such as these, among the heathen, we are utterly unable to judge: God knoweth. The Apostle does not here speak of these as sharing the gift of Eternal Life, whether they do or not, as a

matter of fact. But, he says, such as these shall have the 'glory and honour,' which cometh from the righteous Judge, and within their hearts that 'peace,' which is the sign of an approving conscience, and the witness of God's favour towards them—a peace, which the things of this world cannot give or take away, and which passes understanding.

## CHAP. II. 11—16.

(11) For there is no respect of persons with God.  
 (12) For all, who sinned without law, without law too will perish; and all who sinned under law, by law will be judged. (13) For not the hearers of the law are righteous with God; but the doers of the law shall be made righteous,—(14) *the doers of the law, I say*; for whenever nations, which have not law, do by nature the *things* of the law, these, though not having law, are law to themselves; (15) such as show the outcome of the law written in their hearts, their conscience witnessing with (it), and between one another their reasonings accusing or else excusing;—(16) in the day when God will judge the secrets of men, according to my Gospel, by Jesus Christ.

### NOTES.

71. v. 11. *there is no respect of persons with God.* St. Paul is here quoting the words of Deut. x. 17, as well-known to his readers, 'God regardeth not persons;' but he uses them in a wider sense than they had ever thought of.

72. v. 12. *without law*, that is, without any written revelation of God's will, such as the Jews had.

73. v. 12. *under law*, literally '*in law*,' as in a house or place, so as to be surrounded with it.

74. v. 12. *will perish.* What this word 'perishing' means is not explained: we shall see more plainly hereafter. But the 'sin,' spoken of in this verse,—*'all who sin without law will perish,'*—is the same, of course, of which St. Paul has been speaking all along—the sin of those, whether Jews, Christians, or Heathens, who 'keep back the truth through iniquity,' who consciously persist in doing what they know to be wrong, who 'do not

obey the truth, but yield themselves up to iniquity.' Their own consciences tell such men as plainly as the Bible tells them, that they are working death for themselves. Those who have no revelation, yet who sin thus against the light they have, and the law in their own minds, know that they are injuring their own inner being, and becoming daily more dark and cold in spirit, more helplessly bound in the fetters of evil; and they feel, withal, a wretched sense of guilt and uneasiness within, which tells of the 'Wrath of God' being revealed in their own hearts against the wickedness of their lives. In one word, they are 'perishing' by the moral law of nature; nor, in fact, does the voice of revelation bind the judgment more certainly upon them, than the voice of their own consciences.

75. v. 13. *not the hearers of the law are righteous with God.* The Jews are not righteous before God, in the sight of God, as they supposed, because they had the Law, and heard it, and were taught out of it to know the only true and living God and His requirements, whereas the ignorant heathen worshipped their innumerable idols. Nor are Christians righteous before God, for a similar reason, because they have the more glorious revelation of God's Truth and Love in the Gospel.

76. v. 13. *the doers of the law shall be made righteous.* No human being, whether he be Heathen, Jew, or Christian, *is* righteous in virtue of his own merit of any kind, so as to be able to stand before God as a righteous creature, in the strength of his own righteousness. But all who, according to the light and strength vouchsafed to them, are 'doers of the Law,'—all who do what is right and good and true, as far as they know it, —shall be '*made* righteous,' shall have God's righteousness freely given to them, shall be pronounced to be righteous, counted as righteous, dealt with as righteous—in one word, shall be regarded by God as His own dear Children, not by virtue of any merit or claim, which any one of them can derive from 'the Law or Sect which he professeth' (Art. xviii.), as if he could be saved from God's wrath by that, but by virtue of God's Free Grace alone, declared to us in His Son, Christ Jesus.

77. v. 14. *for whenever nations, &c.* St. Paul has just used the expression 'doers of the Law,' intending to include under that description both Jews and Gentiles. But, remembering that he was, perhaps, going too fast for his Jewish readers, who would hardly follow him at once in this generalization, he interrupts his sentence (which is completed in v. 16,) to show, by way of parenthesis, that the good and true among the heathen might rightly be called 'doers of the Law,' though they had no written revelation.

78. v. 15. *the outcome of the Law*—that which is produced, the essential product, the real thing in which the law results, 'that which it is its

*business to teach and enforce, its purport.* (*Vaughan.*) Though the heathen have not particular laws, as the Jews, regulating their conduct in this or that respect, yet they have certain principles to guide them, which principles these particular laws of the Jews were meant to exhibit and enforce. So our Lord sums up the 'work,' or 'outcome,' of the whole Law in one short sentence: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind, and with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself.'

79. v. 15. *their conscience witnessing with (it),* that is, with the purport of the Law written in their hearts. That, which the mind's eye reads there written, the conscience attests to be good, and bears witness with it that it is a word written by the finger of God; just as the conscience bears witness with any Divine Truth, which we may read in the Bible or elsewhere, and attests it to be good, to be a word of God.

80. v. 15. *and between one another, &c.* Not only does the conscience of each individual testify to the goodness of the law, but there is also 'public opinion' about things right and wrong, and men, 'between one another, in their mutual intercourse, can 'reason' and judge accurately about the conduct of others.

81. v. 16. *in the day, &c.* Here the Apostle completes the sentence interrupted at the end of v. 13.

In the fifth chapter St. Paul will tell us that 'the grace of God and the free gift by grace,' the gift of righteousness, 'abounded unto *the many*,' unto 'all men,' unto the whole human race that fell in Adam. He says that, under the new covenant of the Grace of God in the Gospel, all human beings were declared to be accepted before God, as the Jews were declared to be under the old covenant; they were all pronounced to be righteous, not accursed, creatures—righteous not in themselves, but for the sake of Christ, their Head,—to be dealt with, all of them, as children, not as outcasts. In the passage, however, which we are now considering, and all along till we get to these expressions of the fifth chapter, St. Paul is not speaking of infants, and young children, and the whole human race, but only of the faithful and true-hearted among them, who 'do the works of the law,' according to their light and the strength vouchsafed to them; and such as these, he says, shall be declared righteous in the 'day of judgment.' Whenever Christ shall appear to visit and judge in His Father's Name, now amidst the affairs of daily life, as well as on the Great Day of future account, they shall be pronounced righteous. They shall have a righteousness given them by the free grace of God; they shall have the actual enjoyment of this gift; they shall realize the blessedness of having 'their unrighteousness forgiven, and their sins covered.' In the Apostle's view, in fact, the



gift of righteousness is being continually renewed to such as these by the free forgiveness of sin in this life, as well as finally declared on the great day of account,—not merely given once for all at first. We shall see this more plainly as we proceed.

82. v. 16. *according to my Gospel, by Jesus Christ.* It was no part of St. Paul's Gospel (that is, of course, the Gospel which he preached,) to teach that God would judge the world, or to teach that Jew and Gentile would equally be brought under that judgment. For that he had only to appeal to the consciences of men, as well as to the old Jewish Scriptures. 'Say unto the righteous, it shall be well with him; say unto the wicked it shall be ill with him.' The ministers of the Gospel were not *sent* to deliver this message; though they often had occasion, as the Apostle had here, to recall the thoughts of men to the fact, that there was a righteous order in the world, and that the day would surely come, when a righteous Governor would judge the secrets of men.

The new message of the Gospel, in connection with the matter now before us, is this, that this judgment shall be conducted 'by Jesus Christ'—that the Father 'hath given Him authority to execute judgment upon the sons of men, because He is the Son of Man.' And this is a word of comfort and Hope for us. For He, we are sure, has a tender sympathy for us His brethren, and can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; and though dealing a righteous judgment to each according to his deeds, He will know how to mingle mercy with judgment as each case shall require.

## CHAP. II. 17—24.

(17) Behold! thou art called a Jew, and reposest on the Law, and gloriest in God, (18) and knowest the Will of God, and distinguishest *the things* which are more excellent, getting orally instructed out of the Law; (19) and thou art confident that thou thyself art a 'guide of the blind,' a 'light to those in darkness,' (20) an 'educator of simple ones,' a 'teacher of babes,' having the embodiment of knowledge and truth in the law! (21) Thou, then, that art for teaching another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou, that preachest not to steal, dost thou steal? (22) Thou, that sayest not to commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery?

Thou, that abominatest idols, dost thou plunder temples? (23) Thou, that gloriest in Law, through transgression of that Law dost thou dishonour God? (24) For the 'Name of God is being blasphemed through you among the nations,' as it is written.

## NOTES.

83. v. 17. *thou art called a Jew.* As has been said before, the Apostle sets before himself and his readers a Jew of the very worst class, not, of course, meaning to say that any of them were such, but endeavouring in this way to get in the point of his weapon, at the weakest part of his supposed opponent's case, and knowing that, if he can once get a Jew to admit that any one son of Abraham may and must be judged, like any other man, by the righteous judgment of God, without favouritism, he will have struck a death-blow at the whole corrupt system of Judaism. Perhaps he may have in his eye, even more than the Jew himself, the Roman proselyte, whose Judaism, however strong, would not be, as it were, ingrained or inbred. These might, in some cases, at all events, be more ready to yield access to the truth; and they would naturally desire, if it were possible, to see their friends and kindred embraced within the pale of God's grace, and not shut out, by the exclusive spirit of the Jewish religion, till they too had submitted to become one with the Jews.

84. v. 19. *'guide of the blind,' &c.* These are titles which the Jews, or their Rabbies, actually assumed with reference to those of their own people, as well as the heathen, who came under their influence as teachers.

85. v. 22. *plunder temples.* It would seem that some Jews did really pilfer or plunder from the temples of the heathen gods, in the towns where they dwelt; thus, of course, exciting the just indignation of the natives. See Acts xix. 37, and Joseph. Antt. iv. 8, 10. Their merely defrauding the Temple of its sacrifices, or the priests and Levites of their portions, (for which the Jews are blamed in Neh. xiii. 10—12, Mal. i. 13, 14, iii. 8, 9,) would not be likely to attract the notice, and excite the indignation of the Gentiles.

86. v. 24. *as it is written,* namely in Ezek. xxxvi. 20—23. But in the whole of this passage, as well as in the kindred one, Isaiah lii. 5, reference is to the dishonour done to God's Name, not by the immoral conduct of His people, but by their suffering and humiliation, which brought a reproach upon the Lord their God, as if He could not save them. So that St. Paul has here merely made use, as he often does, of an apt quotation, which occurs to him, as an expression of his own thought.

## CHAP. II. 25—29.

(25) For circumcision, indeed, profiteth, if thou be a doer of the Law ; but, if thou be a transgressor of the Law, thy circumcision has become uncircumcision.

(26) If, then, the Uncircumcision keep the requirements of the Law, shall not his uncircumcision be reckoned for circumcision ? (27) and that, which is Uncircumcision by nature, fulfilling the Law, judge thee, who, with the letter and circumcision, art a transgressor of the Law ? (28) For not he, who is so apparently, is a Jew, nor is that, which is apparent in the flesh, circumcision. (29) But he, who is so in secret, is a Jew, and circumcision is of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter,—whose praise is not of men, but of God.

## NOTES.

87. v. 25. *for circumcision, &c.* It is obvious that this whole passage may be directly applied to the case of *Christians* and *Heathens*, as in the following paraphrase: 'The baptism of a Christian has a meaning and use, if he walks faithfully; otherwise his baptism becomes a mere nullity. If, then, an unbaptized heathen does that which is good and right and true, shall not his unbaptized state be reckoned for baptism? and they, which are heathens by nature, and walking according to the light vouchsafed to them, judge those, who, baptized Christians as they are, yet knowingly transgress the law of their Lord? For he is not a Christian, who is so merely in name and profession, nor is that true baptism, which is only outwardly with water. But the Christian in God's sight is he who is one inwardly; and the baptism, which is of value before Him, is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the outward form.'

88. v. 29. *whose.* The Greek relative, here employed, must be referred either to the true *Jew*, or to the true Jew and the true circumcision, as a whole, taken collectively.

## CHAP. III. 1—8.

(1) 'What then is the advantage of the Jew, or what the profit of circumcision?' (2) Much, in every

way. Why, in the first place, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God. (3) 'But what if some (of them) were unfaithful? Surely their unfaithfulness will not do away with the good faith of God?' (4) Nay, let God prove to be true, though every man should be a liar, as it is written, 'That Thou mightest be justified in Thy words, and prevail when thou pleadest.' (5) 'But, if our iniquity establishes God's righteousness, what shall we say? Is God unjust in bringing wrath upon *us*?' (I speak after the manner of a man.) (6) Nay, not so; since then how shall God judge the world? (7) 'But, if God's truth abounded through my lie to His Glory, why am I still withal to be judged as a sinner?' (8) And *why* not *say*, as we are calumniated, and as some assert that we do say, that 'we should do evil, that good may come'—whose judgment is just.

## NOTES.

89. v. 1. *what then is the advantage of the Jew?* St. Paul is here imagining the thoughts which may start up in the mind of a Jewish objector, and answering them.

90. v. 2. *in the first place, that they were entrusted, &c.* St. Paul only mentions this one point of advantage, which the Jew has above the heathen, and then, without naming others, as he might have done, he is carried off by the impulse of his argument to other matters.

All his language here again may be well applied to those unfaithful Christians, who bring dishonour on the Name of God among the heathen in the present day, and whom the heathen himself, though unbaptized, and ignorant of the name of Christ and the letter of Christianity, yet keeping the law of truth and right, according to his light, shall one day judge. For instance, it might be asked, 'If you say the heathen may be saved without the knowledge of the Gospel, what advantage, then, hath the Christian, or what profit is there in Christian Baptism?' And a similar answer might be given: 'Much, in every way: in the very first place, because to them are entrusted the Holy Scriptures, the books of the New Testament as well

as the Old.' And to this we might go on to add, 'To them are given the means of grace, and the hope of glory.'

91. v. 3. *but what if some were unfaithful?* He supposes the objector to have been silenced sufficiently on the first point, and to take up other ground. 'What, if some of our people have turned out badly, as must be allowed, and broken the covenant, so far as they are concerned? But God's promise was made to the whole seed of Abraham. Surely, the unfaithfulness of a few will not do away with His good faith, will not be a sufficient ground why He should break His own plighted word to our forefathers.' Presently St. Paul will show that they have entirely mistaken the nature of the promise made of old to Abraham. Here, however, he reserves his full reply, and merely answers: 'No! nothing that I have said or intend to say—nothing that I maintain or teach—will amount to this, will give ground for any such charge of a breach of faith on the part of the Holy and Blessed One.' For the Greek words, rendered 'faith' and 'unbelief' in the E. V., should here be translated 'faithfulness' and 'unfaithfulness,' in which sense both these words occur in Soph. Œd. Col. 611. See also Xen. Exp. Cyr. ii. 5, 21.

92. v. 4. *prove to be true*, when the matter is examined into, and seen as it really is.

93. v. 5. *but if our iniquity, &c.* The objector takes up as it were, the Apostle's last words, and tries to turn them to his own account in the argument. 'You say that God's good faith will still be maintained unimpaired in spite of the unfaithfulness of some of us. If this be the case, our unrighteousness does but establish, confirm, the righteousness of God. [The context would rather seem to imply that the expression, 'righteousness of God' is here used as an equivalent for the 'good faith of God' just spoken of, and in contrast with the unrighteousness or iniquity of men. If, however, the Apostle be understood as using the words in the same sense as that in which he has used them all along, for the righteousness which God gives to man, then the objector's argument is that the unrighteousness of His people only increases the importance, the value, and the necessity of that righteousness, which he has pledged His word to give them. In either case the point of the argument remains the same.] 'God's glory, God's purpose, is not hindered or interfered with in any way by us through our iniquity. Why then should He visit us with wrath? Is He not unrighteous in punishing us, when we have only given occasion for His glory to shine all the brighter through our deficiency?'

94. v. 5. *I speak after the manner of a man*, that is, 'I do but speak as I can imagine a man might speak.' The Apostle shrinks from the very semblance of using in his own person such language or such an argument.

95. v. 6. *since then, how shall God judge the world?* St. Paul does not, as yet, directly and fully reply to the objector's question; he only negatives it, disclaiming, as before, the idea that anything he had ever said, or ever could say, anything he had ever taught or maintained, would lead justly to the conclusion, that God was in any the least degree unrighteous in any one of His acts. If He were, if there were one speck of unrighteousness attaching to His character, how could He be fitted to judge righteously the world?—as our consciences and the Scriptures teach us, and as St. Paul himself had been laying down in this very Epistle, He certainly will. 'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do that which is right—right *in itself*, not right, *because He does it?*' St. Paul is very probably referring to these words of Abraham.

96. v. 7. *but if God's truth, &c.* The same objection is here repeated in a slightly different form.

97. v. 7. *why am I still withal*,—why am I, that have actually by my falsehood helped to make God's truth more conspicuous and glorious, (which ought to be reckoned on my side rather,) to be still, after all that, treated as a sinner?

98. v. 8. *and why not, &c.* 'Yes! And why not go on a step further, and carry your principle to its proper result?'—adding an indignant censure upon those who, from his preaching the free Gospel of God's grace, attributed to himself such an abominable notion.

### CHAP. III. 9—20.

(9) 'What then? are we preferred?' Not at all: for we have before laid the charge that both Jews and Gentiles are all under sin; (10) as it is written: 'There is none righteous, not even one; (11) there is none that seeketh earnestly after God. (12) All are gone out of the way; they are together become useless; there is none that doeth good, there is not even one. (13) An opened sepulchre is their throat; with their tongues they deceived; the poison of asps is under their lips; (14) whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. (15) Their feet are swift to shed blood. (16) Ruin and wretchedness are in their

paths; (17) and the way of peace they know not. (18) There is no fear of God before their eyes.' (19) Now we know that, whatsoever the law saith, it speaketh to those under the law; so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become amenable to God. (20) Inasmuch as by works of law shall no flesh be made righteous before Him. For by law is the full knowledge of sin.

## NOTES.

99. v. 9. *what then? are we preferred?* The Apostle has now prepared the way sufficiently for his purpose, and comes to assert boldly the entire equality, in the sight of God, of all mankind. The Jew is not preferred before the Greek or Gentile in the righteous eye of Him, who is the Father of all. There is no favouritism—no 'respect of persons'—with God. He has already more than once hinted at this; and we, looking at his words by the clear light of Christianity, can see this plainly enough. His expressions in the second chapter, and his replies just made to the Jewish objector, involve this principle, which, however, he now sets down before them, for the first time, in plain words. In order to this, he once more brings forward the objector, and puts in his mouth a direct question upon the point at issue, to which he gives a distinct reply. 'Are we preferred'—literally 'being held before' 'others?' 'No! not at all. The Jew will be treated by the same rule of judgment exactly as the Gentile. Each will be dealt with righteously, and will be judged by the light he has had, according to his works.' And this judgment will bring home the holy requirements of God's pure and perfect law, with condemning power, to the heart and life of every man. The whole world will become amenable at God's tribunal, will become under sentence to God, as, at the very best, imperfect, erring, sin-defiled, creatures, needing, all of them, that 'righteousness of God,' which He Himself has revealed in His Gospel for all.

100. v. 9. *we have laid before the charge*, asserted, stated, laid it down, (that is, throughout the first two chapters, more or less distinctly, in various expressions). He seems to say, 'Do not be startled at this assertion. You have already, in fact, gone along with me, in admitting it. At all events, you have allowed me to make it. Having so far listened to me, do not break off suddenly without reason now, because I put the matter a little more plainly. Hear what your own Scriptures say, &c.

Now such words as these surely describe a state of life, which must be liable to God's judgment. And yet of whom is the Psalmist writing? To whom does the Law, (that is, the Jewish Scriptures generally,) address itself? to whom do these very words refer? Not surely to Gentiles, but to *Jews*, to those "under the Law."

101. v. 10. *there is none righteous, not even one.* The Psalmist in this passage is describing the *general* depravity of the age in which he lived, in terms very similar to those of the prophet Elijah: 'I *only* am left, and they seek my life.' And yet came the answer of God to him: 'There are seven thousand left in Israel, who have not bowed the knee to Baal;'—where we may believe the definite number is put for an indefinite multitude of people, unknown, indeed, to the desponding prophet, but known to Him who reads the hearts and searches the reins, and 'knows them that are His,' the true and faithful in every land, in every age, under every form of religion. So, though the words before us give such a gloomy account of the state of things in Israel, we must not suppose it to have been really so very bad as the Psalmist imagined, and his language implies. To him it seemed that he was left almost alone on God's side. Yet even he could not have meant to include, in his general terms, the case of infants and young children. There were, doubtless, thousands of humble souls, unknown to him, serving God devoutly according to their light, in the midst of a naughty world, and of whom the Lord will take account on that day when He 'maketh up His jewels.'

However, what is here to be expressly noticed is this, that to use these words as a proof from Scripture of the universal depravity of man, is simply to wrest them from their true meaning, and to destroy the value of the extract, for the very purpose for which the Apostle quotes it,—namely, to show that in their own Scripture there is language actually used of Israelites, sons of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, not 'sinners of the Gentiles,' language so strong and severe, as must surely be enough to convince them that the Psalmist, at all events, and the other writers of the Sacred Books, did not for a moment believe that an Israelite, merely as such, would be screened in any way from the Divine judgment.

The words in vv. 12—17 do not occur at all in the English Authorised Version of Psalm xiv., nor, of course, in the Hebrew original. They do appear, however, in some MSS. of the LXX. Version, and in the Latin and some other Versions, but have evidently been inserted at a later date, because of their occurring in this passage of St. Paul's Epistle. Hence verse 3 of Psalm xiv. in the LXX., at the end of which this insertion is made, will be found to be of extraordinary length. The whole passage, however, is found in the Prayer-Book Version of the Psalms, which is chiefly Cover-



dale's, made from the Latin and German. But in the Bible the different parts can only be found in detached passages; and St. Paul seems to have taken them as such, by memory, and, therefore, with more or less of literal exactness, out of the LXX. Version, as it then existed, of Psa. v. x. xiv. xxxvi. liii. cxi. and Is. lix.

102. v. 18. *an opened sepulchre*, 'yawning, and therefore pestilential and corrupt.' *Vaughan*.

103. v. 19. *it speaketh to those under the Law*; that is, it speaks to Israelites, not to the heathen; it is describing the abominable wickedness of the former, not of the latter.

104. v. 19. *and all the world became amenable to God*: 'all the world,' that is, not Gentiles only, as you are ready to suppose, but Jews as well as Gentiles.

105. v. 20. *by law is the full knowledge of sin*. The most perfect obedience will be full of imperfection, and fall infinitely short of the holy requirements of God's perfect law. The more we know of that holy and blessed law, and the more we learn to love it, the more also shall we be made aware of our own shortcomings, the more shall we be convinced of sin, of our utter unworthiness, on account of any righteousness or goodness of our own, to stand before the presence of our God. The clearer knowledge, therefore of the law, which the Jews possessed, and on which they prided themselves, so far from being a matter about which they were at liberty to indulge vain thoughts of self-glorification, would have generated, if that law had been properly studied, the same spirit which made Job of old lay his hand upon his mouth, and say, 'I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes;' or which forced from Isaiah the words of reverential self-abasement, 'Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.'

## CHAP. III. 21—26.

(21) But now, apart from law, the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed of by the Law and the Prophets; (22) I mean the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe. For there is no distinction. (23) For all sin, and come short of the glory of God, being made righteous freely through His grace,

through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus ; (24) whom God set forth, a propitiation through faith in His blood, unto the showing forth of His righteousness, with a view to the remission of bygone sins during the forbearance of God,—(26) for the shewing forth of His righteousness in the present season, to the effect of His being righteous, and making righteous him *who is* of the faith of Jesus.

## NOTES.

106. v. 21. *the righteousness of God*, that is, as we have had it all along, the righteousness which God of His own free grace bestows upon man, that so he may be able to stand before Him as a righteous, not an accursed, creature, and be dealt with, when deserving chastisement, not as an outcast, but as a child.

107. v. 21. *The righteousness of God has been manifested*. The Apostle is here taking up again the thread of the passage in i. 17, which he had broken off (note 25) because he felt that, before he could expect a Jew to take pleasure in hearing of a gift of righteousness, he must first teach him that he needed such a gift,—that he too, though calling himself righteous *par excellence*, one of 'the righteous people that keepeth the truth,' was really as much in need of God's free gift, as any one of his fellow-men. Having digressed for a while in order to enforce this, and having brought the matter to a point in iii. 20,—'by works of law shall no flesh be made righteous before God, for by law is the clear knowledge of *sin*,' instead of *righteousness*—he now resumes his former position almost in the same words, and proceeds to speak about this 'righteousness of God,' to which the Law and the Prophets, indeed, 'bore witness,' if they had only heeded them, (either by speaking generally of God's forgiving and restoring grace for the penitent, or by testifying beforehand of the coming of Christ,) but which was now first revealed, and 'manifested' unto men in the Gospel.

108. v. 22. *I mean*. This is the best English equivalent to express, in its present connection, the force of the Greek conjunction here used.

109. v. 22. *the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all, them that believe*. These words, as before stated (note 25), are an amplification of those in i. 17, 'the righteousness of God from faith unto faith.' The phrase 'from faith,' in one passage, is expanded into 'by faith in Christ Jesus,' in the other, and indicates that the

righteousness, which God gives us, is not for any works of ours, but simply as the result of our taking Him at His own gracious word, and believing in His Love, declared to us in Christ Jesus. The phrase 'unto faith' is expanded into 'unto all and upon all them that believe,' by which St. Paul desires to exhibit the *extent* and *freeness* of the Divine Gift. It *extends* 'unto all,' it is *bestowed* 'upon all'—them that believe. (1) The Jew cannot claim it by *works*, ceremonial or moral: it is a righteousness which is given as 'of faith,' 'by faith in Christ Jesus.' (2) The Jew cannot claim it *by faith for himself alone*, to the exclusion of his Gentile brother: it is a righteousness which God means to extend 'unto all,' Jew and Gentile alike. (3) The Jew cannot claim it by faith, in common with the Gentile, in such a way as to maintain a notion of his own peculiar privileges as a child of Abraham, so as to imply any favouritism on the part of God. He cannot claim it by faith, as his special *right*, by virtue of the ancient promise: while the Gentile may be admitted to share it, but only as a *favour*, and by a special act of God's mercy. No! it is a righteousness which *all* must receive as an act of mere favour, but which God will bestow freely 'upon all' them that believe. Thus every pretence of privilege and favouritism is struck away from under the feet of Jewish believers. The pure and simple Gospel, of the 'Kindness and Love of God our Saviour towards Man' as Man, is now set clearly before their eyes, probably for the first time in the history of the Christians at Rome.

110. v. 23. *for all sin, and come short of the glory of God.* The force of the Greek Aorist is here again best given by the English Present, not all 'have sinned,' but all 'sin,' by individual acts, in all ages, under all circumstances, and 'come short' (the Greek present), not by individual acts, but as their permanent condition, of the glory of God.

111. v. 23. *come short of the glory of God,* are unworthy to see the Face of God in His Glory, to share the glorious inheritance of the saints in light.

112. v. 23. *being made righteous freely through his Grace.* As he has just said that *all* sin, and *all* come short of God's glory, so now he must mean that *all* are made righteous, justified, freely by the Grace of God. In former days the Jews were all 'made righteous,' treated as righteous, though many of them individually were unfaithful. They were all embraced in God's favour, and dealt with as children, not for any works of righteousness which they had done, nor for any virtue they possessed in themselves as descendants of Abraham, but because of God's free Grace, which had called them before others to the knowledge of His Truth, and the present enjoyment of His Gift of righteousness—a gift, however, which was intended for all mankind, and was actually in fact bestowed from the

first upon them, though as yet they knew it not, for it was not yet revealed to them. But now it is revealed that this gift of righteousness is meant for all, that all are *being made righteous* (the Greek Present, implying their continuing state of righteousness),—all men everywhere, though many may be unfaithful, who *have* heard the blessed tidings, and many more may not yet have heard them, and so may have little or no present enjoyment of their Father's Love.

The Apostle's words in this verse most probably mean this, because he afterwards (vv. 15—19) fully and explicitly states it, namely, that the justification here spoken of extends to *all*, to those who have never heard the name of Christ, and who cannot have exercised a living faith in Christ, as well as to Christians. It is *certain* that, in this latter passage, he is speaking of the whole human race. It is *possible*, however, that in the passage we are now considering, he may not yet have arrived at this full generalization of the Gospel Message, and that by the words '*all sin*,' and '*all come short of God's Glory*,' he may not have in his mind all human beings whatever, but merely '*all believers*,' in connection with his preceding words that this righteousness is '*from faith unto faith*,' '*unto all and upon all them that believe*.' It is possible, therefore, that he may be here only speaking of '*all that believe*' as being still sinners, whether Jews or Gentiles, as all coming short of the glory of God, and being all justified by His Free Grace. And if this be so, then St. Paul does not here speak of any receiving this gift of righteousness, but only '*those who believe*.'

But then also it must be remembered, that, whatever may be the Apostle's exact meaning here, he does distinctly, in chap. v., include the whole of mankind as recipients of God's grace in the Gospel; and that, admitting the above restriction of his meaning in the present passage, the fact, that '*those that believe*' receive the gift of righteousness, cannot be understood to exclude from it all those who do not believe; otherwise, what will be said of infants, baptized or unbaptized? We must also consider what St. Paul means by constantly reiterating the words '*of faith*,' '*to faith*,' '*them that believe*,' &c. He is fighting with all his might against the Jewish dogma that righteousness is to be obtained by *works of law*. It is in opposition to this that he lays such constant stress upon the word '*faith*' in his arguments, having in his mind not infants and young children, or the multitudes of heathen, who cannot believe in the Gospel, because they have never heard it, but adults who are seeking after righteousness, and may consciously receive it by faith, and enjoy the blessedness of having peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. And even in heathen men, who have never heard the Gospel, and cannot '*believe*' in the full sense of the word, there is a faith in the Living Word, which

speaks within them; there is a living obedience to the law of truth and love, which they find written upon their hearts by the finger of God, which is akin to the true living faith of a Christian, and to which is granted a kindred feeling, a measure of enjoyment, even in this life, of the gift of righteousness, a sense of gladness and freedom in the consciousness of at-one-ment with the Right and the True, a share of the peace of God's children, 'which passes all understanding.'

But, whatever may be St. Paul's exact meaning here, these words are at all events a foreshadowing of the full announcement which he makes in chap. v., namely, that the whole human race are partakers of the gift of life in the Gospel, of the blessing of righteousness, as they are of the 'rain from heaven and fruitful seasons,' many of them,—most of them, indeed,—without knowing that these daily mercies, which they partake of, are signs to them of their Father's Love, that the beauty of nature is the smile of God, and that every flower which grows beside their pathway speaks a word of hope and peace to them from Him, 'who is not far from any one of them,' 'in whom they live and move and have their being.'

118. v. 23. *through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.* The word 'redemption' implies a buying back, a ransoming, as of a captive from slavery. And this is the proper meaning of the Greek word thus translated. But what is this redemption? redemption from what? What is the idea present to the Apostle's mind? He does not here unfold it. But in chap. v. he speaks of Sin, personifying it as a horrible tyrant, who 'reigns through death,' who has power by nature to inflict death upon us all; and so in Heb. ii. 15, the Devil, as it were, the concentrated essence of sin, is spoken of as having the 'power of death.' The accursed bondage in which we should all be held, by our mere natural birth, to this tyrant Sin, is, as we shall see more clearly further on, the bondage or slavery from which our Lord has redeemed us. We are all sinful creatures; and the more we know of God and of His Holiness, the more too we know of sin, and the more we must naturally dread death, as taking us out of this world of things seen into the awful eternal world for judgment. With this knowledge of our sinful state, and without the Gospel, we should, indeed, be bound down under a weight of woe, under the consciousness of a heavy burden, hopelessly aware of our coming doom, and even now feeling it beforehand. Having thus the certainty of the curse upon us, being, indeed, under it already, we should have no motive to strive with evil, we should fall helplessly into the hands of the Evil master as his very bond-slaves; we can but do his will and perish; the noblest thought of a man would be to 'curse God and die.' But Christ has come, sent by the Grace and Love of our Heavenly Father, to redeem us, to buy us back with a precious price

from this state, and to set us wholly free from the power of evil, that Sin 'should no longer have dominion over us.' In what way this 'redemption' is effected, will appear more fully as we proceed.

114. v. 24. *whom God set forth, a propitiation through faith in His blood.* Dr. Vaughan observes that the word here translated 'set forth,' in the only other passages in which it occurs in the writings of St. Paul, and, indeed, in the whole New Testament (Rom. i. 13, Ephes. i. 9), is used in the sense to propose to one's-self, to purpose. Hence, he says, 'here too it may refer to God's purpose, rather than to His revelation of it—whom God set before Himself as, purposed to make, a propitiation, &c.'

But without insisting upon this, and adhering to the usual translation of the passage, we may make the following remarks upon it.

(1) St. Paul here says that '*God Himself set forth,*' exhibited, '*His Son to us,*' &c. This is in exact accordance with what the Scriptures everywhere teach us, that '*All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ;*' though it is a truth, which is painfully left out in so much modern religious teaching.

(2) St. Paul says that '*God set forth His Son to us as a propitiation,*' that is to say, as something to make acceptable, as one through whom God will smile graciously upon us as our Father, notwithstanding all our own unfitness. In Him the Father was well pleased, and with us in Him. In His Holy obedience unto death was that expression of perfect righteousness exhibited in the life of a Son of Man, which the Father beheld with entire satisfaction, and accepting Him, whom He Himself had made to be our Head and Elder Brother and Representative, He graciously accepted us all in Him.

(3) St. Paul says that God sent forth His Son to us '*as a propitiation through faith in His Blood,*' or '*as a propitiation through His Blood, to be applied by faith*' (Vaughan). The general meaning of the passage is the same in both translations. It is by looking specially at the fact of our Lord's Death,—at the fact that He, at His Father's bidding, took our nature wholly upon Him without our sin, and in that nature, though spotless and innocent, was given over to share that death, which we must suffer because of our sin, that so He might be wholly one with us, taking part with us in all the evils which sin has brought upon us, except that tendency to sin which we all inherit,—it is by looking at the fact that He was '*made sin*' for us, was treated as if He too had sin in His nature, and, therefore, was under necessity to die as we are, though He knew no sin—it is thus that we have the surest sign that our Father loves us, since '*He spared not His own dear Son, but freely gave Him up for us all.*'

Let us imagine a people separated from their King,—not only by their

own wilful faults, but mainly through some acts of their forefathers—and lying now in misery and want, by reason of their rebellion, torn to pieces by civil discord, their fields ravaged, their homes desolated, a prey to famine, and fever, and countless other forms of evil. And, meanwhile, their King, it may be, sits afar off in his own fair land, and their cry, they think, can scarcely reach him, or, if it does, what can they look for at his hands but wrath and judgment? But his thoughts are not as their thoughts, and he longs to save them from their misery; yes, in spite of all their faults, he still regards them as his children, and would have them believe that he has indeed a Father's love towards them. And how shall he shew forth that feeling of his heart, and convince those fear-stricken wretches of its reality? What, if he should send a dear-loved Son, not to visit them for a day or two, and pass away, but to dwell with them, to become as one of them, to come and share their want and misery and famine and fever—all but their sin—to live and to die with them? Would not this be enough to convince them of the greatness and reality of his desire for their truest welfare, and to bind them down hereafter in loving obedience to his will? Can we not conceive how the Prince, who had thus become their own, wholly identified with those whom he had been pleased to call his brethren, would be regarded as their representative, and act as their mediator,—not to screen his people from the anger of their King, but because in his Son the King looked upon them all, because he had given his Son to live and suffer and die for them all, because he was himself in his Son, reconciling his fallen people to himself, not imputing their offences to them?

And so has the King of Kings been mercifully dealing with us; and so does He now look upon us in His Son, whom He delivered even unto death for our offences, and raised again for our justification. Now are we all regarded as in Him, whom God has given to be our Chief and Head. Through Him we have free access to our Heavenly Father, being counted as righteous for His sake, though in ourselves unrighteous, having peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Now that our Lord has died, death has lost all its sting and bitterness for us, His brethren. We must die now, as before. But now our death is no longer a token of the curse lying heavily upon us, is no longer a woe inflicted on us by the tyrant, Sin. It is now a loving act of conformity to the death of our Lord. He died, because of our sin, because we are sinners, because He was sent to take part with us wholly in all our misery, except our Sin, because we *must* die, and, therefore, He, that He might be wholly one with us, came also to die. But now that He has shown His brotherhood with us so completely, as to share, though without stain of Sin, in that sentence of death, which the Sin in our nature has brought upon us, the reason of the 'must' in our case is entirely changed. We *would not* now be unlike our Lord, or refuse to go down

after Him into the dark valley, into which he has gone before, and through which our loving Father in His Wisdom calls each one of us to pass, under the guidance of our Head, that we may enter into His Kingdom of Light and Life. The curse is taken away. Our Father in Heaven smiles graciously upon us, as He looks upon us in His Son, as one in Him, as one with Him, as made wholly one with Him by that crowning act of His Life of Obedience, the shedding of His Blood. 'His death was the central and complete act of the whole work of redemption. The death presupposes the incarnation, life of obedience and self-sacrifice, &c., and is the necessary prelude to the resurrection, ascension, intercession, &c. Thus it is at once the briefest and the most comprehensive term for the whole redeeming work of Christ' (*Vaughan*). Through that precious Blood-shedding, the whole race has been redeemed from the curse. It is the bond of union between God and Man, the sign that God loves us, loves the whole race, and will deal with them henceforth, even in His severest chastisements, as righteous creatures, not creatures lying under a curse, but creatures whom He has reconciled and restored to Himself through the Son of His Love.

(4) But, though all men are thus redeemed, and belong, not to the Devil, but to Christ, and are even now under His care and government, though they may not yet be blessed to know His Name, yet 'to us,' Christians, the Apostle says, 'God set forth His Son, as a propitiation through faith in His Blood.' We are privileged to know the Great Mystery of Godliness, to know in what way, through the Wisdom of God, we have been redeemed from the power of evil, to look at Christ Jesus through faith in His Blood, and behold in Him the propitiation for our sins, the object which makes us, the whole human race, of which He is the Head, acceptable to God. That blood is the sign and seal of God's Love to us. We have only to believe the witness which it gives us that there is, indeed, 'Goodwill towards men' in the Bosom of our Heavenly Father. We have only to rest at peace in the assurance that He sees us, not as we are in ourselves, in our sin and deformity, but as we are in Him, in whom we are 'made righteous.'

(5) But, then, how awfully strong is the necessity which is thus laid upon us, Christians, that we defile not the Body, of which Christ is the Head, and we are the members, by continuance in any known sin! Let no one dare to turn the Grace of God into lasciviousness. The very greatness of our Father's Love towards us makes deeper the sense of guilt and misery in those, who have once tasted its blessedness, but have wandered away like the prodigal, to waste the substance of the soul in riotous living, and famish in the far-off land, where, though redeemed creatures, and able to live and act as freedmen of Christ, they have chosen to live as the wretched slaves of sin.



115. v. 24. *unto the showing forth of His righteousness, &c.* The English Version is here exceedingly defective and obscure. The Apostle wishes to say that God 'set forth His Son' with two ends in view, one aimed at indirectly, as one result among others to which the act in question led, the other the direct and special object for which that act was expressly intended. This difference is expressed in the Greek by the use of two different prepositions, here rendered by *to* and *for*, the latter of them involving the idea of throwing the mind or heart *forward* with a strong will or purpose. What he says, therefore, is that our Lord Jesus Christ was set forth (1) with an indirect object in view, 'unto the showing forth of that righteousness,' which God gave to the patriarchs, and to the Jews generally, and heathen also, in bygone days, and which He gives now, it may be added, to the mass of human kind, who do not yet know the truth as it is in Jesus, 'with a view to the remission' or letting go, ('forgiveness' is too strong a word to represent the Greek in this place,) of the sins committed in the days of ignorance, ('bygone sins,' St. Paul calls them, because he is thinking more of the Jews in former days, than of the Jews or heathen in his own and future days, to whom, however, the same principle of God's 'forbearance' applies,) 'in the time of God's forbearance,' when He 'winked at' many things, which in the clearer light of the Gospel stand condemned. But, he says, (2) God set forth His Son also, with a direct and special object in view, for the showing forth of that righteousness, which He gives 'in the present time' to all them that believe, 'so as to be both righteous' Himself, (that is, true and faithful all along to His promises,) 'and making righteous him who is of the faith of Jesus.'

In other words, St. Paul says, the secret of that righteousness, which was reckoned to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and which was given to the whole Jewish nation all along, is now explained. It was not on account of any special merit or virtue of theirs, as the Jews had been supposing. It was simply a gift of God's Mercy, which is meant for all men, which is actually given to all men, and which it is His Will shall now be revealed to all, who are called to the knowledge of His Grace in the Gospel. God, then, is shown to be 'righteous,' true to all His Promises made of old to the Patriarchs, to whom He first revealed Himself more fully than to others; but He fulfils them in the way in which He always meant to fulfil them, namely, by the way of faith, in which He first gave them to Abraham. He is shown to be righteous, 'justified in His words, and clear when He is judged,' though He grants no exclusive privileges, though He extends His gift of righteousness to all mankind, making righteous all, whether Jew or Gentile, 'who are of the faith of Jesus.'

As before, the fact that such as these, who are able consciously to be-

lieve in the Gospel, are justified,—have the blessedness of *knowing* that they are justified, and so have peace with God,—does not exclude the case of baptized or other infants, nor, in fact, the mass of human kind, who are not yet privileged to know this, but of whom, in chap. v. and in other parts of this epistle, the Apostle distinctly speaks as sharers in this gift of righteousness.

116. v. 26. *to the effect of His being righteous, &c.* These words are often explained to mean that God does not treat lightly sin in His Universe: but, if He reconciles to Himself, out of His boundless Compassion, our fallen race, it is by sending His own dear Son to bear the weight of woe which we have deserved, to suffer in our stead, as our substitute, in this way to die for us sinners. Thus, it is said, He vindicates His ways, and is able to be 'just, and yet the justifier of him that believes in Jesus.'

But this, as already intimated in the previous note, is not at all the Apostle's meaning here. He is referring again in these words to the argument which he has been maintaining all along—to the point which he has left unsettled—to the questions which he left unanswered at the beginning of the chapter. He is now, at last, giving the reply to those questions. 'You see, after all, God is righteous, He is faithful in respect of His promises made of old to you and your race. He has now, by the setting forth of His Son, explained what His dealings of old with you meant, how He *then* regarded you as righteous, called you righteous—not for any merits of your own or your forefathers, but for His own Mercy's sake in Him, in whom He loved you, and not you only, but all mankind, from before the foundation of the world. It was in His Son, the second Head of the Family of Man, in due time to be revealed, that He loved you then, and not for anything in your forefathers. All the righteousness, which He gave to them, He gave through Him. All the goodness which He saw in them, He saw through Him, from whom alone it came to them, in whom it existed pure and perfect, and undefiled with the consequences of the Fall. Therefore, in now also justifying through faith, and not for works of any kind, ceremonial or moral, He is only carrying out the system, upon which He has all along been acting. There is no fickle change in His purpose or plan, as you suppose, which may render Him liable to the charge of unfaithfulness. You have mistaken the meaning of the old dispensation entirely, and supposed that you were made righteous by Circumcision and the keeping of the Law, when Circumcision only declared and ratified, to each individual Jew, the righteousness which God had given him from the first, in the secret counsels of His Wisdom and Love, as a *child of man*, and the Law, if you understood it rightly, would only condemn you utterly, and work out wrath upon you. Do you now begin to understand that God can

be righteous, true to His promises to you and to your father Abraham, and yet can extend His gift of righteousness to others,—that He can judge an unfaithful Jew on the one hand, and on the other open wide the Kingdom of Heaven to all ‘those that believe’?

## CHAP. III. 27—31.

(27) Where is the glorying then? It was excluded. Through what kind of law? *one* of works? No, but through a law of faith. (28) We conclude, then, that by faith a man is made righteous, apart from works of law. (29) Is God *the God* of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also. (30) If, at least, ‘God is One,’ who will make righteous the Circumcision in consequence of faith, and the Uncircumcision through the faith. (31) Do we then make void law through the faith? Far from it; rather we establish law.

## NOTES.

117. v. 27. *where is the glorying then? &c.* ‘In all this, then, namely, God’s setting forth His Son as a propitiation, for sins both of the past generations and the present, where is there anything for you to glory in? Where is the ground of the Jew’s pride, his self-conceit of his own importance, his vain confidence in his own merits as a son of Abraham? The ‘righteousness’ and other blessings, which he has, are all a free gift of God’s Love. And if Abraham and the fathers of our nation were justified, as no doubt they were, that too was through a law of faith, not of works. Justified, indeed, they were by the grace of God, as all others of the human race, even before they were born. But if they had this *declared* to them, if they were privileged to know that they were justified, and to receive a sign and seal of it in circumcision—if thus they had the joy of peace with God, and the pledge given them by God Himself that they were looked upon and dealt with as righteous creatures,—it was simply in consequence of their faith, their taking Him at His own gracious word, not for any virtue they had of their own, not for anything which they had done to make themselves righteous; and, in fact, in themselves, they were still unrighteous. All glorying then was from the first cut off, if you had only under-

stood God's dealings with yourselves and your fathers. It was 'excluded' from the first by the 'law of faith,' under which both they and you have really been partaking all along of the mercies of God, and not, as you suppose, under a 'law of works,' which could only have condemned you. That very Law of Moses, under which you have been placed, if regarded merely, as you regard it, as a 'law of works,' would overwhelm you with an awful judgment. But that Law itself contains also a 'law of faith,' suited to the wants of sinful creatures. It tells you of the Mercy and Love of God, as well as of His Holiness; it provides pardon for the penitent, and means of grace and at-one-ment for all; and shadows out beforehand, in a thousand gracious ways, the Gospel of Christ.'

118. v. 12. *Is God (the God) of the Jews only? is He not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also.* 'The idea of this brotherhood of all mankind, the great family on earth, implies that all men have certain ties with us, and certain rights at our hands. The truest way, in which we can regard them, is as they appear in the sight of God, from whom they can never suffer wrong, nor from us, while we think of them as His creatures equally with ourselves. There is yet a closer bond with them as our brethren in the Gospel. No one can interpose impediments of rank, or fortune, or colour, or religious opinion, between those who are one in Christ. Beyond and above such transitory differences is the work of Christ "making all things kin." Moreover, the remembrance of this brotherhood is a rest to us when "our light is low," and the world and its distinctions are passing from our sight, and our thoughts are of the dark valley and the solitary way. For it leads us to trust in God, not as selecting us, because He had a favour unto us, but as infinitely just to all mankind. It links our fortunes with those of men in general, and gives us the same support in reference to our eternal destiny, that we receive from each other, in a narrower sphere, in the concerns of daily life. To think of ourselves, or our church, or our country, or our age, as the particular exceptions which a Divine Mercy makes, whether in this life or another, is not a thought of comfort, but of perplexity. Lastly, it relieves us from anxiety about the condition of other men, of friends departed, of those ignorant of the Gospel, of those of a different form of faith from our own; knowing that God, who has thus far lifted up the veil, "will justify the Circumcision through faith, and the Uncircumcision by faith," the Jew, who "fulfils the law," and the Gentile, "who does by nature" the things contained in the law.' *Jowett.*

119. v. 30 '*God is One.*' The Apostle quotes here the well-known formula of the Jewish law, 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.'

120. v. 80. *who will make righteous.* It should be observed that, both here and elsewhere, when the Apostle says that God 'justifies' any, or

'makes them righteous,' he means, that He justifies them *in their own consciences*, He brings home to them *consciously* the gift of righteousness. Abraham, for instance, was righteous in God's sight, before it was declared to him that 'his faith was reckoned to him for righteousness. Jewish children of old were righteous in God's sight, before they were declared to be so in circumcision; and yet they could exercise no faith at that early age, and many years must have passed before it could have been said of them that they were 'justified in consequence of faith.' So Christian children are signed and sealed in their baptism as children of God; but years may pass before the sense of God's Love is brought home to their hearts, before they know the blessedness of being 'made righteous' by the free grace of God, before they can be said to be 'justified through the faith,' which, in their infant years, they cannot have exercised.

Hence, St. Paul is not speaking here at all of young children, whether Jewish or Christian, or of Heathens, who have no opportunity of hearing and receiving 'the faith,' as it is in Jesus. Many, indeed, of these latter, walking faithfully according to their light, may enjoy some sense of the gift of righteousness, may be 'consciously justified,' may have some measure of peace within the heart, 'in consequence of faith' in the Right and True and Good. And all of them, as St. Paul plainly teaches afterwards, are counted as righteous creatures, though they may not know it, through the Grace of God, bestowed upon the whole human race in His own dear Son, whom He has given to be their Head, and whose members they are. And all will be judged alike. Jews, Christians, and Heathens, by the same righteous rule, according to their works, and according to the light vouchsafed to them, in that day when God shall judge the secrets of men by the Lord Jesus Christ.

121. v. 30. *in consequence of faith . . . through the faith.* The Apostle's expressions are noticeable; the change of form in them has a meaning. There is but one God for all, he says, and He will deal by the same rule with all, and not make favourites in His judgment of men. He will justify those of the circumcision, Jews of the past and present, who have lived and died as true children of Abraham, not having been brought under the higher influences of the Gospel, 'in consequence of faith,'—not in consequence of any works of theirs, their birth from Abraham, or circumcision, or keeping of the law, but in consequence of faith generally, of the living principle which ruled their hearts and governed their actions, however imperfect and defective these may have been. And the Uncircumcision, those of the heathen, who now and hereafter shall hear and receive the message of life in the Gospel, he will justify 'through the faith' in Christ Jesus.

122. v. 31. *rather, we establish law*—that is, law, generally, whether

that of the Jews, or that written in the consciences of men. 'The faith' of Jesus, influencing the life, will bring forth that faithfulness in daily act, which, though at the best very imperfect, so as not to constitute a righteousness, in the strength of which a man could stand before a Holy God, will yet be far more complete and all-embracing, than any which the law itself could produce. 'What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God did effect by sending His own Son,' to live and die for us sinners. Thus are we brought to yield to God's Holy Law a cheerful, willing, happy obedience for Love's sake; and so the law itself is established and glorified.

#### CHAP. IV. 1—8.

(1) What then shall we say that Abraham, our father, obtained after the flesh? (2) For, if Abraham was made righteous in consequence of works, he has ground of glorying. But no! not so before God. (3) For what says the Scripture, 'But Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness.' (4) Now to one that worketh the payment is not reckoned by way of favour, but by way of debt. (5) But to one not working, but believing on Him who maketh righteous the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness. (6) Just as David utters the blessing on the man, to whom God reckoneth righteousness apart from works, saying, (7) 'Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered over. (8) Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin.'

#### NOTES.

123. v. 1. *What then shall we say that Abraham, our father, &c.* The Apostle here puts the question in a mild form himself, and not in the person of a hostile and ill-conditioned objector. In fact, he here identifies himself with his brethren—'our father,' what shall we say? His argument is this. 'Suppose we drop for the present the question of the Jewish nation at large, and confine ourselves to him, to whom we refer as our great forefather, to whom first the promises were given, and to us in him. What

then did Abraham obtain by the fleshly ordinance of circumcision, which was enjoined upon him? What was the value of that? Was he not made righteous by it, separated from all others as the favoured head of a race, the friend of God? Does it not seem that he, at all events, was justified by works?’

Many connect the words ‘after the flesh’ with ‘father,’ translating, ‘What shall we say that Abraham, our father after the flesh, has gained?’

124. v. 2. *for if Abraham was made righteous by works, &c.* St. Paul admits the importance of the question, and answers as if he meant to say, ‘It is well to bring the matter to a point, as it were, with this question. For, if Abraham was made righteous in consequence of works of any kind, then he has, of course, (in opposition to what I have just been saying,) a ground of glorying, something to trust to, and to boast of, independent of that Mercy of God, which other men need. But, no! he has nothing of the kind before God. For hear what the Scripture saith, &c.’

The answer, in fact, is twofold, as he brings it out in the course of this chapter.

(1) Abraham was justified, was pronounced by God to be righteous, not because of his circumcision, or his acts of obedience, his leaving his country, or offering up his son, but because of his faith, because he trusted in God, he took God at his word, he believed God’s promise that his seed should be as the stars, when as yet, in his old age, he had no son. He shewed thus that the principle of true faith ruled in his heart, which would, on all needful occasions, exhibit itself in life and act.

(2) Abraham was pronounced to be righteous before he was circumcised. So that his circumcision, like Christian Baptism, was in fact a sign, appointed graciously by God Himself, to declare and ratify to him the blessing already given, to convey and make it over to him, as it were,—as a legal document may convey formally a property, which has long ago, in point of fact, been given, and possessed and enjoyed by the recipient.

125. v. 4. *now to one that worketh, &c.* This is an axiom drawn from the every day transactions of common life. ‘If Abraham had really worked, even so far only as to submit to be circumcised, *on condition* of acquiring righteousness thereby,’—(and every Jewish proselyte was taught this doctrine, that by submitting to circumcision and the other Jewish ordinances, and so becoming one with the chosen people of God, he would thus acquire righteousness in consequence of his work,)—‘it must be admitted that he would have had a right to claim that righteousness as his *due*. But here in the Scripture, you see, the case is not so. Nothing whatever is said about his receiving righteousness as the discharge of a rightful claim, the payment of a debt; but he received it simply as a free gift and favour, because he believed in God.’

126. v. 5. *but to one not working, &c.* The English reader might suppose that the reference here is to Abraham expressly and singly, as if the Apostle had said, 'But here, in this case of Abraham, to one not working, &c.' The Greek negative adverb, however, here employed, would forbid this interpretation of the passage, if we suppose it to be strictly used. The reference would then be general, to *any such*, including, of course, the case of Abraham,—to any one who, independently of works, believes in God, &c. Nevertheless, the former interpretation seems so natural, that it is most probable that St. Paul uses the negative here, as in Hellenistic Greek, without strict classical accuracy. And of this we have other instances in i. 28, ii. 14, iv. 19.

127. v. 6. *Just as David also speaks of, &c.* 'So David also speaks very plainly of forgiveness of sin being free and gracious and unconditional.' The Apostle evidently considers this forgiveness of sin to be identical with justification, or pronouncing to be righteous; and having spoken of the 'blessedness' of receiving the one, he goes on at once, in the next verse, to speak of the 'blessedness' of receiving the other. In other words, the work of justification is not completed once for all, when we are brought near to God as righteous creatures, redeemed and reconciled in the Son of His Love. It is going on continually, through the Life of our Lord. In Him God still looks on us as children, and sets us up again as righteous creatures, notwithstanding our numerous falls. He still receives us as children, forgives, and blesses us, after each of our sinful wanderings, whenever we return to confess our fault before Him, and look by living faith unto Him, whom He Himself has set forth as 'the propitiation for our sins, and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world.'

#### CHAP. IV. 9—12.

(9) This blessing, then, *is it* upon the Circumcision, or upon the Uncircumcision also? We say, now, that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. (10) How then was it reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. (11) And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had* in his uncircumcision: so as to be the father of all that believe in a state of uncircumcision, that the righteousness may be reckoned to them also;



(12) and the father of circumcision, to those who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham, which *he had* in his uncircumcision.

## NOTES.

128. v. 9. *This blessing, then, &c.* 'These words of blessing, then, which David utters,—which were meant for him, and Abraham, and all devout Jews, by the free grace of God remitting all their sins, and pronouncing them to be righteous, though in themselves unrighteous,—are they confined, as by an act of special favour, to the circumcised, so that the Jew may have reason to think himself exclusively entitled to them, or, at all events, may require the Gentile to accept circumcision, and become himself a Jew, before he could partake of the blessedness? Far from it. Abraham himself received the announcement of his being righteous, while yet uncircumcised; and his circumcision was but a sign and seal of the grace already bestowed upon him, just as Baptism is to a Christian.'

'The argument may seem slight to us; it was forcible to the Jew. The state, which was odious and almost loathsome to him, was the state in which the father of the faithful found favour with God.' *Jowett.*

Manifestly, then, the gift of God's righteousness does not depend on circumcision.

129. v. 12. *but who also walk, &c.* St. Paul here strikes his blows again at the root of the three principles of Judaism, by the example of Abraham himself.

(1) Righteousness is the free gift of God, to be received by faith, not by works: for Abraham's faith, not his circumcision or any other work, was counted to him for righteousness.

(2) Righteousness could not be claimed by the Jews exclusively by reason of their covenant relations with God: for Abraham was pronounced righteous, not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

(3) Righteousness could not be received by the Jews differently from other men, by any preference or partial judgment. For those, and those alone, will be pronounced true children of Abraham, and, therefore, heirs of the promises, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, who walk in the steps of his faith, while yet uncircumcised.

## CHAP. IV. 13—21.

(13) For not under a state of law was the promise given to Abraham, or to his seed, that he should be heir of the world, but under a state of righteousness of faith. (14) For, if those, who are of law, be heirs, the faith has been made void, and the promise has been done away. (15) For the law worketh out wrath; since, where there is no law, there is no transgression either. (16) Therefore *it is* of faith, that so it may be by grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that of the Law only, but also to that of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,—(17) (As it is written, ‘I have made thee the father of many nations,’)—in the presence of Him whom he believed, God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth things not in being as if in being; (18) who, beyond hope, believed in hope, so as to become the father of many nations, according to that which was said, ‘So shall thy seed be.’ (19) And, not being weak in faith, he regarded not his own body now grown dead, being somewhere about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah’s womb. (20) At God’s promise he staggered not in unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, (21) and being fully persuaded that, what He has promised, He is able also to perform.

## NOTES.

180. v. 13. *not in a state of law was the promise given to Abraham.* The promises, Gen. xv. 7, &c., upon which the Jews relied, as the charter of their greatness, were not given to Abraham, when he was in a state of law,—under the law of circumcision, or under any such law as that of Moses,—but when he had the righteousness of faith; he had simply *trust*—

ed in God, and, so trusting, had been pronounced to be righteous of God's free grace. St. Paul here adopts the usual Jewish interpretation of these promises, which enlarged the meaning of the words 'this land,' 'the land which thou seest,' to include the whole world. He may have done this naturally from his own Jewish training, because accustomed to it, and because it was a notion so familiar to his Jewish readers. But he, doubtless, in his own mind spiritualized the promise, to mean that the true seed of Abraham, all true believers, shall, like the peacemakers, 'inherit the earth,' have the full, rich, enjoyment of all things in earth and heaven:—some being able to say, in the highest sense, 'All things are ours, for we are Christ's, and Christ is God's;' but all, in every nation, who are walking in the steps of Abraham, that is, who are walking patiently in the path of duty according to the light vouchsafed to them, receiving God's blessed gift, not earned by their works, poor and unworthy at the best, but bestowed by His free grace—being made partakers, each in their measure, of the peace of God's children, which passes understanding, and which they would not exchange for all the power and riches of the world.

181. v. 14. *if those who are of law be heirs, &c.* If only those are to partake of the blessing, who shall have first deserved it, by keeping the requirements of law, whether written or not, there is an end to the promise given to Abraham, and his faith, 'the faith,' that was reckoned to him for righteousness, is made void. For the law, with its holy requirements, which we are utterly unable to keep as they ought to be kept, would make it hopeless for any man, and therefore, would have made it hopeless for Abraham himself, to obtain the inheritance. The promise made to him would have been a mere mockery, and his faith, which had been so commanded, would after all have been fruitless and void.

182. v. 15. *the law worketh out wrath.* Our own consciences, having some sense of law, condemn us too frequently, working wrath. But 'the law,' the clearer and fuller revelation of God's holy will, '*worketh out wrath*'—enlightens our eyes, quickens our consciences, makes us more deeply sensible of our utter inability to carry out that perfect will, leaves us helplessly condemned.

183. v. 15. *where there is no law, there is no transgression either.* Without law of some kind, there is no transgression. The essence of all sin is to break a known law. Hence, many of the acts of young children, lunatics, &c., though wrong, yet being done in necessary ignorance of a law to the contrary, are not transgressions, are not sins. So, too, under the Jewish dispensation, many wrong things were done, and permitted—sometimes even, commanded—in the Mosaic law, (such as the contracting polygamic marriages, concubinage, divorce, slavery, wholesale butchery of

unoffending persons captured in war, a man's killing his slave, 'for he is his money,' Ex. xxi. 21, &c.,) which were not transgressions of any known law, and, therefore, were not sinful then, however now condemned by the letter or spirit of Christianity. And so, too, among the ignorant heathen, many things are practised, which, however offensive in the eyes of a white man and a Christian, are not transgressions of God's known Law, and are not reckoned as sins in the sight of Him, who searcheth the hearts and judgeth righteously the children of men, until that Law is brought home to their hearts and consciences by the teaching of His own Good Spirit, not merely reiterated in their ears, with the voice of authority, by the lips of a Missionary, laying down the law to them, often with most obscure and defective utterance, in some difficult native tongue, upon matters of the deepest personal and social interest. Among the reproofs that will be passed 'in that day,' are there none that will justly belong to us, Christians and Missionaries, for the harsh uncharitable, judgments which we have passed in our arrogant self-confidence upon our heathen fellow-men?

134. v. 16. *therefore it is of faith, that so it may be by grace, &c.* Therefore God has graciously willed it to be of faith, as a favour, a free gift of His Love, that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not depending on man's hopeless endeavours to work out a righteousness for himself. 'It' is of faith: what is? The Apostle does not fill up the sense. We may supply 'the inheritance,' or 'the promise,' or 'the whole,' or, better still, perhaps, 'the righteousness,' of which he has been speaking all along, and to which he has just made a fresh reference in v. 13.

135. v. 17. *as it is written, &c.* This is an adaptation of Gen. xvii. 5 to St. Paul's present purpose. Or, rather, he spiritualises the expression, 'many nations,' which in the original promise referred to the various tribes, that sprung literally from the loins of Abraham, in descent from Isaac, Ishmael, and his other sons.

136. v. 17. *in the presence of Him, &c.* The Patriarch, Abraham, stands at this moment as the father and type of all believing souls, in every age, past, present, or to come, under all circumstances, in the sight of that God, who looks upon the future as present, and when He says, 'I have made thee, &c.,' already has called into being, as it were, before Him, 'things which are not.'

137. v. 17. *quickeneth the dead.* The reference appears to be to the quickening both of Abraham, 'already dead,' and of Sarah's womb.

138. v. 18. *beyond hope, that is, beyond all hope.*

## CHAP. IV. 22—25.

(22) Wherefore also it was 'reckoned to him for righteousness.' (23) But it was not written with a view to him alone, that it was reckoned to him, (24) but with a view to us also, to whom it is to be reckoned, who believe on Him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, (25) who was delivered with a view to our faults, and raised with a view to our justifying.

## NOTES.

139. v. 22. *reckoned to him for righteousness.* The quotation is from Gen. xv. 4.

140. v. 24. *who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.* Let it be noted that the Scriptures do not speak of our Lord rising by His own inherent power from the grave, of His exerting His own Divine Might to break the bars of death asunder. The language of the Bible is again and again, as here, 'God raised Him from the dead.' Thus 'He was raised by the glory of the Father,' Rom. vi. 4, 'Him God hath raised up,' Acts ii. 24, 'This Jesus hath God raised up,' Acts ii. 32, 'whom God hath raised from the dead,' Acts iii. 15, 'God, having raised up His Son Jesus,' Acts iii. 26, 'God that raised Him from the dead, and gave Him glory,' 1 Peter i. 21. This is our consolation, to know that He, the Son of Man, went down to the grave, as we must do, trusting in God, and God did deliver Him—Him, our great Head and Chief, our Elder Brother. This is our great comfort, the very ground of our hope, to know that a Man in our nature, a perfect Man, a pure, loving, and true-hearted Man, through the power of the Holy Spirit, granted to Him freely, without stint or measure, according to the greatness of the work for which He was sent into the world,—(and that same gracious help will be granted as freely to us, in our measure also, as we need it, in proportion to the work which God calls each one of us also to do for Him in the world,)—was enabled to persevere to the end, trusting in God, as any one of us must do, and thereby says the Apostle (Heb. ii. 13) giving the plainest sign of His perfect oneness of brotherhood with us; to know that, at last, through the same Eternal Spirit helping Him, He gave up, in obedient faith, the mortal life, which He had taken for our sakes, in obedience to His Father's Will, commending His Spirit into the gracious Hands of Him who loved Him, with the cry, 'It is finished!' and



then, further, to know that, by raising Him thus from the dead, God has declared by a mighty sign to us all, that the work of our redemption is, indeed, completed, that as He had died with reference to our sins, so now He has been raised with reference to our justification.

141. v. 25. *who was delivered*, that is, not merely to the suffering of death, but to the whole work of humiliation, which culminated in His Death, reaching from the hour of His Conception to that of His Resurrection.

142. v. 25. *who was delivered with a view to our faults*. The expression '*for our sins*,' in the English Version is very ambiguous, and allows all kinds of conjectures to be made by the English reader, as to the way in which our Blessed Lord may be said to have been '*delivered for our sins*,' or '*rather for our faults*.' For, let it be observed that the Greek word here used is a very mild one to express '*sins*:' in *Liddell and Scott's Lexicon*, the meaning of the singular noun is given, '*a falling beside, a false step, blunder*.' It expresses, therefore, all the slips and errors, intentional or otherwise, those arising from infirmity and ignorance, as well as from wilful transgression, which the whole human race can commit. '*With a view to*' these, our Lord was delivered. The Greek expression is precisely the same in the two clauses of the verse—'*He was delivered with a view to our faults*;' *He was raised with a view to our justifying*.' Whatever, therefore, may be said in other passages, yet from this now before us, (however naturally it might be drawn from the English Version,) no inference can be drawn that our blessed Lord was delivered *for* our sins, in the sense of bearing the burden of them, suffering the punishment due to them, &c., any more than it can be inferred that He was raised *for* our justification, in the sense of bearing the burden of it, &c. In fact, the Greek preposition here used is precisely the same as that which is used in v. 23, 24, and used similar with an accusative,—'*it was not written with a view to him alone, . . . but with a view to us also*.' In what sense our Lord was delivered specially with a view to our sins, the Apostle does not here stop to unfold. We shall find this fully stated further on.

143. v. 25. *raised with a view to our justifying*, that is, the justification of us, our being justified. By thus raising our Lord from the death, our Heavenly Father gave us a sign that the at-one-ment or reconciliation was completed, that our Head was accepted as having finished the work which His Father had given Him to do, and in Him we too are accepted. His words are still limited, indeed, to those who consciously believe. But in the next chapter he goes on to extend the boundless grace, manifested in the Gospel, to the whole human race.

## CHAP. V. 1—11.

(1) Made righteous then out of faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ ; (2) by whom also we have had the access through faith into this grace in which we stand, and glory in hope of the glory of God. (3) And not only so, but we glory also in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh out endurance, (4) and endurance experience, and experience hope ; (5) and hope maketh not ashamed, because the Love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which was given us. (6) For, while we were yet weak, Christ at the due time died on behalf of the ungodly. (7) For hardly on behalf of a righteous man will one die ; *hardly, I say*, for, perhaps, on behalf of the good man one is ready to die. (8) But God establishes His love to us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died on our behalf. (9) Much more then, being made righteous now through His Blood, shall we be saved through Him from the wrath. (10) For if, being enemies, we were at-oned to God by the Death of His Son, much more having been at-oned, shall we be saved through His Life ; (11) and not only so, but also glorying in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the at-onement.

## NOTES.

144. v. 1. *made righteous then out of faith.* Made righteous, pronounced to be righteous, out of faith, not out of works—of God's free grace, not for any claims of birth, not for our own deservings in any way—we have peace with God, we are assured of His favour to us, we know that He loves us, that He Himself is our Father and Friend.

Note well that the idea which the Apostle connects inseparably with the use of this word 'faith,' and has principally before his own mind at all times, is not so much that of the believer's *subjective activity* in laying hold consciously of the promises, as that of the *objective existence* of those promises, as the free gift of God's grace, to be received simply as such, not claimed as a due, in consequence of birth or of works. So in the wilderness it might have been said of the great body of the Israelites, 'Saved then by merely looking at the brazen serpent, not by any long and doubtful medical process,'—where the main thing intended to be marked is not so much the act of him who looks, as if that had any worth in it, but the act of grace which gave him such a simple means of recovery. It is necessary to note this, because the Apostle's words might be understood to mean that none are justified, except they have conscious faith in God's promises in Christ Jesus,—by which, in fact, the justification is made after all an affair of 'works.' But, of course, the Apostle believed, at all events, that young baptized children were justified, though they cannot have faith. It is plain, therefore, that he is speaking in this passage only of adult Christians,—of the access *they* have had into the actual realisation and enjoyment of the state of grace in which they stand, (and not they only, but the whole human race, though as yet the mass of mankind do not realise and enjoy it,) of *their* comfort and peace in the midst of their tribulations,—of *their* sense of God's Love, shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, as they come more and more to know Him,—of *their* joy in God Himself, when consciously recognised as their reconciled, or rather, reconciling, Father and Friend. In the latter part of this chapter, however, St. Paul extends the gift of righteousness through Christ Jesus to the whole human race.

145. v. 2. *by whom also we have had the access by faith, &c.* The Apostle distinguishes throughout two parts of our Blessed Lord's work, the one completed in the culminating act of His Death, the other commenced at His Resurrection, and carried on now by His Life—the one having reference to our sins, the other to our justification. So here, by the whole work of our Lord upon earth, summed up in His Death, 'we have had access,'—still 'by faith,' that is, by trusting in God's Goodness, not in any deserts of our own—'into this state of grace,' of at-one-ment or reconciliation, 'in which we stand;' by this God declared to us that, though in ourselves 'weak,' 'sinners,' 'enemies,' He yet regards us as His children, having sent His own dear Son to take our nature, to become a true Brother of our race, and, as such, to share our woes to the uttermost, even that which we should otherwise, as sinners, have reason to dread with utter horror, the bitter woe of death; by this He has at-oned, recon-



ciled, brought us near, to Himself. And now, being thus rought near, we are *kept* near. We have peace maintained with God, notwithstanding our daily faults and falls, by the life which our Brother-Man, our Head and King, now lives for us. Because He has been raised from the dead, and God has set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, ever to appear in His Presence for us, we know that we are still justified, that we are still recognised as God's children, that our Father indeed loves us, having given us into His dear Son's Hand for time and for eternity. We know that our hope of maintaining that freedom of access, which our Lord's work on earth was God's appointed means of assuring to us, is thus secured, by the gracious provision of our Heavenly Father, from all fear of being cut off, by reason of our deficiency of *works*. It does not depend on them or on us—on our frames or feelings, doings or deserts,—but on Fatherly Love of God toward us.

In one word, we have a peace akin to that, which the children of a loving earthly parent may have in the sense of their security. They may, indeed, do wrong—they may turn to be disobedient or prodigal. But they are still objects of his tender regard. If chastened and corrected, they will be dealt with as children, not outcasts. If even lost to their home for a season or altogether, it will be a thing to break their parent's heart, not satiate his anger. The pain, which such a father would feel at the loss of his child, will abundantly justify his loving embrace, when he goes out to meet the returning penitent, and falls upon his neck and kisses him. He can thus pour out upon him a free and full forgiveness, which in his heart he had ready from the first, without any stain being left upon his character, for not dealing *justly* with his other children. But they, the dutiful and loving children of the family, will enjoy a settled peace in the assurance of their father's love, a peace which comes from a simple, child-like, trustful dependence—in other words, from *faith*—not from any thing they have done to draw it forth or deserve it. The difference between this imaginary case and ours is that *we* have first to be assured that God is our Father, that He does love us, fallen and sinful creatures as we are, most truly and tenderly. And though, it is true, a thousand gentle signs in nature indicate this,—‘the rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness,’—the flower by the wayside, the beauty which covers the earth, the sea, and the sky, and which our eyes are made to behold, and our hearts to enjoy—yet the reassuring and convincing proof of it, amidst all life's changes and chances, and, above all, under the ever-deepening sense of His perfect holiness and our utter unworthiness, is the great Sacrifice of Love, which He Himself has provided for us, and of which the Apostle will speak more freely presently.

146. v. 2. *and glory in hope of the glory of God.* 'Reconciled and at peace with God, and assured of the permanency of this at-one-ment, we too can now glory, not as the Jew glories, with a self-confident, mistaken notion of his right to claim a share in God's Kingdom, from some supposed merit in himself, or his forefathers, but with a humble, yet assured, trust, in our Father's Goodness. We can triumph in the hope of the glory of God, a glory this, such as 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor man's heart conceived, but which God hath prepared for them that love Him.'

147. v. 3. *we glory in our tribulations also.* 'Yes, and our very tribulations, (the pronoun here expressing the Greek article, and implying the certainty that we shall have such tribulations,) so far from being signs that our Father does not love or care for us, are the very things which bring home the sense and assurance of His Love more completely to our hearts. For 'tribulation worketh endurance,' as practice forms the athlete, hardships in the field the soldier, ocean-buffetings the mariner, each, after being exercised, being now able to endure more steadily, having acquired the habit of endurance, not being now ready to quail and faint at the first sign of danger and difficulty. And 'endurance works experience,' trial, proof of our faith, of its real power to sustain us in the time of our need. And this 'experience works in us hope,' a firm trust that we shall be sustained even to the end, whatever calls of duty may be made upon us, whatever greater trials may await us than any we have yet encountered. And this 'hope doth not shame us,' put us to the blush, before ourselves or before the world, by failing us, and disappointing us, in our season of extremity. Why? How do we know this? Why are we sure of it, so as to assert it confidently, not merely of time past, but of all times, of the permanent state of our spirit's life? Because we are sure of *God's love* to us, which will not fail us; because that Love, the sense and assurance of it, has been 'shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which was given to us.'

148. v. 6. *for, while we were yet weak, Christ at the due time died on behalf of the ungodly.* For here is the plain convincing evidence of the wondrous Love, with which our faithful Creator has loved us, that He gave His Son for us, not as good, and loving, obedient creatures, but as sinners. As St. John also writes, 'Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' 'The point of these words is not that, while we were yet sinners, *Christ died for us*, but rather that the *Love of God* (in sending Him), like that of a parent to a child, was called forth by our helplessness.' *Jowett.*

149. v. 6. *at the due time*, at God's appointed time, 'in the fulness of time.'

150. v. 6. *on behalf of*. Once for all let it be stated distinctly, there is not a single passage in the whole of the New Testament, which supports the dogma of modern theology, that our Lord died for our sins, in the sense of dying *instead of* us, dying *in our place*, or dying so as to *bear the punishment or penalty* of our sins. It is often said that He died *for us*, He died *for our sins*; but the Greek preposition, here rendered by 'for,' never, in any single instance, means 'in our stead,' but 'on our behalf,' as in this passage. The distinction is well shown in the following passage from Xenophon's *Anabasis*, vii. 9, 10. 'So Seuthes inquired, 'What, would you be willing, Episthenes, to die (*hyper*) *on behalf of* this youth?' And he, having stretched out his neck, said, 'Strike, if the youth bids it, and will feel obliged.' Seuthes went on to ask the youth, 'if he should strike him (*anti*) *instead of* him.'

In the above extract, the first question is merely whether Episthenes would be willing to lay down his life in any way on behalf of the boy, not to die in his place. The use of the former preposition does not *exclude* the idea of the latter, but does not necessarily include it. In fact Episthenes might have died in battle *on behalf of* the youth, and yet the youth be killed after all. If, therefore, in any other parts of Scripture, it were laid down distinctly that our Lord died *in our stead*, the 'for' in such expressions as that now before us would have to be interpreted accordingly. But the fact is that there is no such statement in the whole of Scripture. The common modern dogma has probably arisen from following the English Version without due attention to the Greek original.

The real meaning of the expression 'He died for us,' or 'He died for our sins,' is this, 'He died on our behalf,' 'He died for our sakes,' 'He died to help us in respect to our sins.' Just so, we have St. Peter saying, John xiii. 17, 'I will lay down my life *for* thee,' for thy sake, on thy behalf, in thy defence; and so St. Paul says, Rom. xvi. 4, 'they laid down their necks for my life,' in defence of my life, on my behalf.

And the truth is that our Blessed Lord certainly, whatever he did, did not 'die *in our stead*.' If it be *spiritual* death, which is meant, as the doom of our sins, we know that He did not die spiritually at all, and, therefore, did not die in our stead. If it be *physical* death which is meant, He did die that death for our sakes, but not in our stead, for we must all die that death still.

151. v. 7. *a righteous man . . . the good man*. There seems to be a distinction of meaning intended in the use of the two Greek words, translated here by 'righteous' and 'good.' The 'good' man, the brave and

good, indicates a nobler character, more likely to win esteem and warm affection, than the 'righteous,'—the merely upright and just.

152. v. 8. *But God establishes His Love to us.* Let this be noted: it is *God Himself*, who establishes, makes sure, His Love to us, in giving up His own dear Son for us. 'All things are of God.'

153. v. 9. *much more, then, being justified now through His Blood, shall we be saved through Him from the wrath,*—that is, from the wrath of which he has been speaking all along, as declared not in the law only, but in our own consciences, against all acts of our lives which have been consciously evil, as, the best must confess with shame, too many of theirs have been.

154. v. 9. *through Him*, that is, through His Life, now that He has been raised from the dead, and ever lives to act as our Head and King, and make intercession for us at God's right hand.

The Apostle brings out again distinctly the two parts of our Lord's work. (1) We 'have access,' are brought near, reconciled, at-oned, justified, pronounced righteous, through His Blood, in which expression is summed up His whole life of humiliation on earth, from the womb to the grave. (2) We shall be saved through His Life, His ever living to appear in the presence of God for us, from that wrath, which (i. 18) is revealed from God upon all wilful evil, and which, our consciences tell us, as well as the Bible, is deserved by each fresh act of sin we daily commit, sin not of mere ignorance and infirmity, but sin committed, as alas! we all do commit it, against the Light, and our better knowledge of the pure and holy will of God. We shall be saved, daily and hourly, from that wrath, by having our faults freely pardoned for His sake, when confessed and repented of, 'our unrighteousness forgiven and our sins covered.' Frail and faulty as we are, we shall still be looked upon and dealt with as children in Him our living Head. His perfect obedience is that which God looks at, and in Him is He well-pleased, and with us in Him. Our Heavenly Father has given us all, as younger children of the House, into the hands of our Elder Brother, who, by His own course of submission and self-sacrificing love, will instruct and guide us; and He will keep us to the end, teaching us to do more and more perfectly the will of God in this life, and helping us to our joyful resurrection through the grave and gate of death, which we need not fear to enter, since He has gone before. Though 'the wrath' is still there, and ever will be, burning for ever fiercely, while there is any such evil to be devoured by it—the wrath revealed against all "unrighteousness of such as keep down the truth in iniquity,"—yet we are safely sheltered from that wrath in the Love of our Lord.

Of course, the Apostle will have presently to guard this precious doc-

trine from antinomian perversion. He here assumes that we are yielding to be embraced by that Love, not wilfully fighting with it, persisting in that which our own hearts know to be evil, and as such to be working death in us.

155. v. 10. *enemies*, that is, not hated by God, or hateful to Him, but hostile to Him, as in Col. i. 21.

156. v. 10. *we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son*. The language of St. Paul is, 'God hath reconciled us to Himself by the death of His Son.' 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.' It is not He who needs to be reconciled to us; for He loves us all along. It is we, poor, sinstricken creatures, who need to be reconciled, brought back, to Him. And, in order to this, as the first step to this, we need to be assured of His Love to us. And He has given the most convincing proof of it, in that He sent His own dear Son to take part with us altogether, in all except our sin, in our weaknesses and trials and temptations, and in that which is the very horror of our souls,—that which is the consequence of sin in our nature,—by which Sin, as a hateful tyrant, having power to inflict it upon us, triumphs and lords it, as it were, over our whole race—through dread of which so many all their lives are kept in a state of anguish, subject to bondage—which nothing but a firm trust in God's Fatherly, forgiving Mercy, and reconciling Love, can make us face without terror:—He sent Him to take part in our death. And that death He shared, not worn out with the decrepitude of age, wearied with life's toils, and with the framework of the body already crumbling down and decaying—not after long sickness, wearing out its strength and deadening its sensibilities; but in the prime of life, in the fulness and vigour of manhood, under the most distressing circumstances, persecuted, betrayed, forsaken, rejected,—He the pure and meek, the loving and innocent, rejected for the outlaw, the man of violence and blood,—condemned by an iniquitous judgment, with bitter shame, contempt, and mockery, sentenced to suffer cruel pain and anguish,—and all this done, and His precious blood shed, by those whom He had come to bless and save.

This was the Sacrifice of faith and obedience, offered by One in our nature, and perfect unto the end, which our Father's Loving Wisdom had prepared. In this way our Lord took part with that death, which sin had brought upon us all. As He came to take our nature, and to become one with us, whom He was pleased to call His brethren, it was needful also that He should pay the debt of nature, the debt which Sin (according to the Apostle's bold personification in the next chapter) had the right to demand of Him, if He was really willing to be a true Son of Man. And now that He, our Head, has paid that debt, we are free. We are made partakers of His

death, are reckoned to have died, to have paid this debt of sin, because He died. This is the doctrine of St. Paul. We shall die, indeed, still, but no longer as paying a debt which we owe to Sin, no longer as incurring a part of the curse of our fallen nature. The sting of death is taken away for us. We shall die now because our Father wills it, He wills that all His children shall pass, as their elder Brother has passed before them, through death unto life.

But we are anticipating here the matter, which the Apostle will bring before us more fully in the next chapter. Let the expression, however, once more be noted. The Apostle does not say that *God is reconciled to us* by the Death of His Son, but that *we are reconciled to God*. The difference in the meaning of these two expressions is infinite. It is our unwillingness, fear, distrust, that is taken away by the revelation of God's Love to us in His Son. There is nothing now to prevent our going, with the prodigal of old, and throwing ourselves at His Feet, and saying, 'Father, I have sinned; but Thou art Love.'

157. v. 11. *and not only so, but also glorying in God, &c.* Not only so, says St. Paul, not only 'reconciled,' it is too cold a word to use when we speak of our relation to God in Christ Jesus. We too, like the Jews, can triumph and glory in God Himself, as our Father and God—in all His Excellencies and Perfections, in all the wonders of His Power and Wisdom and Goodness.

'We boast of our recovered powers;  
Lords are we of the land and floods;  
And earth, and heaven, and all, is ours,  
And we are Christ's, and Christ is God's.'

*J. Wesley.*

But we do this, not confiding in anything in ourselves, as meriting His regard or claiming His special favour; we do it 'through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received,' had given us, 'the reconciliation,' by whom God Himself has now 'at-oned' us, brought us back unto Himself.

158. v. 11. *we have now received the at-one-ment.* It is very unfortunate that the true meaning of the word atonement, which occurs in this passage in the English Version, namely, at-one-ment, or reconciliation, should be so commonly lost sight of, and the notion introduced of something paid down to atone (as it is said), or compensate, to God, or, at least, to *reconcile God to us*, for our sins. But the English reader should remember that the word is identically the same in the Greek, as that which has just before been twice rendered in the English Version, 'reconciled.' And, as has been said already, St. Paul is not speaking of anything being done to *reconcile God to us*, but of what God has done to *reconcile us to Himself*; and

so we find him speaking of our *receiving* the reconciliation or at-one-ment, as a gift from our Father's Love.

## CHAP. V. 12—21.

(12) Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, and so death went throughout unto all men, for that all sin ;—(13) For, previously to law, sin was in the world ; but it is not reckoned as sin, if there be no law. (14) Yet death reigned from Adam until Moses, and upon those who sinned not after the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is the figure of the One to come. (15) But, not as the fault, so also is the free gift. For, if by the fault of the one the many died, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *the grace* of the one man Jesus Christ, abounded unto the many. (16) And, not as *it was* by one that sinned, *so is* the gift. For the judgment *was* out of one *fault*, unto a sentence of condemnation ; but the free gift is out of many faults, unto a sentence of justification. (17) For, if through the fault of the one, death reigned through the one, much more they, who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life through the one, Jesus Christ.—(18) So then, just as through one fault, *it passed* unto all men, unto condemnation, so also, through one righteous act, *it passed* unto all men, unto justification of life. (19) For, just as through the disobedience of the one man, the many were rendered sinners, so also by the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous. (20) But law came in by the way, so that the fault abounded. But, where sin abounded, grace over-abounded ; (21) that, as sin

reigned through death, so grace also should reign through righteousness, unto Eternal Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## NOTES.

159. v. 12. *through sin, death.* Geological discoveries abundantly show that not only was death in the world before man's sin, but that pain was in the world, brute force and violence, fierce, ravenous, animals destroying one another, the strong preying upon the weak, the lion upon the lamb. All the notions, then, which are imbibed so unfortunately in childhood from that noblest of poems, but nursery of bad theology, the *Paradise Lost*, about the effect of the Fall of Man upon the animal creation, must be discarded. Half a century ago, it would have exposed a writer to the charge of heresy or infidelity to have said this, to have asserted that *all* death did not come into the world in consequence of Adam's sin; just as two centuries before, it might have brought a philosopher to the stake, to have persisted in asserting that the earth went round the sun, and not the opposite, as the Scripture states it. It is possible that St. Paul entertained this notion himself, namely, of *all* death having come into the world by sin. For we have no reason to expect scientific knowledge of any kind, beyond that of the people of his age, in a Scripture writer. It is not in this way, by securing an historian, or prophet, or evangelist, or apostle, from all errors of detail in matters either of science or of fact, that the power of the Divine Spirit is exhibited in Scripture. The 'spirit and the life,' which breathes throughout the Holy Book,—that which speaks to the heart, and touches the main springs of being in a man,—that which teaches him what is pure and true and loving, and gives him living bread to feed upon in the secrets of his own spiritual consciousness,—this is the work of God's Spirit, these are the 'words which the Holy Ghost teacheth,'—not a mere historical narrative, or a table of genealogies, or a statement of scientific facts, cosmological, geological, astronomical, or any other, in all which matters the books of the Holy Scriptures must be tested by the ordinary rules, which critical sagacity would apply to any other human compositions. So it is quite possible that St. Paul himself may have entertained the erroneous notion, so common among the best Christians within the memory of the present generation. But the passage before us, perhaps, is hardly enough to show this. He goes on to speak of 'death passing upon' all *mankind*; and we may therefore fairly assume that in saying that death 'came by sin,' he is *thinking*, at all events, only of death as entering the world for *man* by reason of the first man's sin.



160. v. 12. *for that all sin.* The Greek Aorist should be rendered by this form of the English Present (see note 110). The expression does not imply, of course, that 'all are sinning' at this moment, but is nearly equivalent to saying 'all are sinners.'

161. v. 13. *For, previously to law, sin was in the world.* The Apostle breaks off his sentence here, with a kind of long parenthesis, extending to the end of v. 17, when he resumes again, in v. 18, the language of v. 13, in slightly modified terms. He appears to have been led into the digression in consequence of his last expression 'for that all sin,' remembering that he had just before laid it down (iv. 15) that 'where there is no law, there is no transgression,' and that, consequently, it may seem contradictory now to include in one general formula, as sinners, (in the phrase, 'all sin,') all human beings whatsoever—infants, young children, and lunatics, as well as rational adults,—ignorant and untutored heathens, as well as intelligent and well-instructed Jews and Christians. He stops short, therefore, for a few moments to clear up this point, and says, 'For, before law was given,' (the context shows that he is speaking of *written* law, and especially the Mosaic law,) 'sin was in the world'—men did wrong, they went astray from the right path, in other words, they *sinned* (for the Greek word, translated 'sin,' means 'an erring from, a missing of the path'). Still, where there is no law, it is not reckoned properly as sin; it cannot properly be called sin; it cannot be regarded as having in it the true essence of that sin, against which God's wrath is revealed, presumptuous, wilful sin, committed against light and better knowledge, which is called by the Psalmist the 'great transgression.' God 'winks at,' and in His mercy overlooks, the 'times of ignorance.' Nevertheless, it was sin—a departure from the path of righteousness and life. And this we see, because all died; 'death reigned,' all along the stream of time, 'from Adam down to Moses,' all the while before the Mosaic law was given, and onward,—yes, 'and over those who did not sin' knowingly and wilfully, 'after the likeness of Adam's transgression,' over infants, and young children, and lunatics, &c., all inheriting a fallen nature, as born of Adam, all prone of themselves to sin, as fallen creatures, all having, in their fleshly nature a seed of evil, and, therefore, lying under the necessity of death. For by death only, as St. Paul will presently show, can that evil be brought to an end for us, and the body be redeemed from its power.

162. v. 14. *who is the figure of the One to come*; that is, who, by bringing, through his unfaithfulness, this necessity of death to every member of the race, is the figure of Him who was to come, and, through his faithfulness, has brought the free gift of life to every member of the race.

163. v. 15. *not as the fault, so also is the free gift*; that is, the free

gift of God's grace outdid infinitely, by its consequences of good, the evil consequences of the fault of Adam.

164. v. 15. *the many*, which verse 18 shows to mean 'all men,' as, indeed, the context itself proves. For 'the many' who 'died in Adam,' were, of course, the whole race; and, therefore also, blessed be God! 'the many,' to whom 'the grace of God abounded, and the free gift by grace of the one man Jesus Christ,' the gift of righteousness, must be the whole race, the whole family of man.

165. v. 15. *the grace of God*. Let it be noted that what the Apostle speaks of here, as ever, is 'the grace of God' Himself, and the gift (of righteousness) by grace, which God Himself, our Father, sends us, by the one man, Jesus Christ. 'All things are of God.'

166. v. 17. *shall reign in life*, shall triumph, exult, in the enjoyment of abundant life.

167. v. 18. *so then, just as through one fault, &c.* The Apostle evidently intends in this abrupt sentence to put strongly forward the antithetical points, namely,

one fault of Adam . . . .	one righteous act of Christ,
unto all men . . . . .	unto all men,
unto condemnation . . . .	unto justification of life.

168. v. 18. *one righteous act*. We may understand by this the one eternal act of loving obedience, by which He surrendered Himself to do the Father's will, to take our nature, and become one with us for our redemption—that act including in itself all the precious details of His obedience in Life and in Death. In the next verse, this 'one righteous act' is expressed by 'the obedience of one.'

169. v. 18. Let the words of this verse be well noted. They are the words of an Apostle of Christ, and blessed be God that he was moved to write them so plainly, that he that runs may read the great truth, the gracious message of God's Love to man. By Christ's one act of loving obedience, the free gift of God has come upon *all men*, unto justification of life, that is, unto a justification which brings with it the gift of life.

170. v. 19. *For, just as through the obedience, &c.* 'As by the disobedience of the one man,' Adam, 'the many,' the whole race, 'were rendered sinners,'—inherited a sinful nature, and, as they came to years of consciousness, sinned actually, more or less, in thought and word and deed,—'so by the obedience of the one man,' Jesus Christ, 'shall the many,' the whole race, 'be made righteous.'

171. v. 19. *the many shall be made righteous*. The use of the future, in this and other such passages, seems to contain a reference to the final declaration of their righteousness on the day of account, of that righteous-

ness which really belonged to 'the many' all along, through the grace of God bestowed upon them in their Head, and which had already been revealed to some, and enjoyed by them, even in this life. But (see notes 81, 120, 127) it also refers to the multiplied declarations of righteousness, which shall be made in this life to the individual members of the great human family. Whenever the 'unrighteousness' of any Jew, Christian, or Heathen, 'is forgiven, and his sin covered,'—whenever he feels any measure of the peace of God's children, in the faithful discharge of any duty, or in forsaking any path of evil,—whenever there is brought home to his heart in any way the message of God's Fatherly Love by means of any one of Earth's ten thousand voices,—then he hears, as it were, a fresh declaration of righteousness, he may know that he is recognised again as a child of God's House.

Though thus declared to be 'righteous' creatures, in God's sight, whether here, in this world, again and again, or finally, on the great day of account, it does not follow that they will not be *judged*,—rewarded or punished, as their Father sees meet,—dealt with, each according to his works. On the contrary, the whole aim of the Apostle is to bring home an assurance to the heart of his reader, that there will be such a judgment for all—that the Jews, though a 'righteous people,' in covenant with God, would not be exempt from it—that all men, though redeemed in Christ, set free from the curse, and made partakers of the gift of righteousness, embraced in a yet more gracious covenant, as children of God in Christ Jesus, would still have to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, to receive each a portion at His hands, according to the deeds done in their mortal bodies.

172. v. 20. *but law came in by the way, &c.* But, 'by the way,' parenthetically, as the stream of human life flowed on, 'law came in,' the revelations of God's will were made more clearly to man, with this effect, that he came to see more plainly the holiness of God, and his own sinfulness, and thus his known conscious wanderings from the way of life were multiplied, and the evil of each act of sin intensified. But God's grace yet more abounded; it defied, as it were, the power of evil to do its worst. He that gave His law, He that revealed His word, He that sent His Spirit, to convince men of sin, gave also at the same time, with clearer and stronger and more abundant evidence than before, the tokens of His Goodness. And at last He sent His own dear Son, to make more plain than ever the beauty of Holiness, and the excellence of the Law, with the full message also of His Fatherly Love to all the world, that as sin had reigned and revelled, as it were, through the death which it had brought on all the race, so now might grace reign through the righteousness, which it would give to all the race, unto Life Eternal, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

178. It may be well to gather up here in one view the doctrine of the Apostle, which he has at length fully enunciated, having advanced step by step in his statement, as the course of his argument required it.

(1) He announces that in the Gospel is revealed God's gift of righteousness, which is not to be claimed, as a matter of right or desert, for any works of ours, but springs from God's free Grace, and must be received by us simply by faith, by looking up to our Father in Heaven, and trusting in His Love.

(2) As St. Paul knew that the Jew of his day, or the Jewish proselyte, for whom he is more expressly writing, even though devout and pious, would suppose himself to be already righteous, in the right of his Jewish birth or practices, and, therefore, fancy that he, at all events, had no need of any free gift of this kind, he must try to convince him of his need of it; and this he proceeds to do by one or two circuitous steps.

(i) He leads the Jews on to condemn very strongly the wilful and gross breaches of the moral law among the Gentiles.

(ii) He turns round upon him suddenly, and asks if he really can believe that the like offences would be overlooked in a Jew, merely because he was a Jew and circumcised.

(iii) He refers to it as a notorious matter of fact that such offences were committed by Jews.

(iv) He further quotes the Jewish Scriptures, as confirming this fact, and charging such things against them.

(v) Having thus broken down, in certain cases, at all events, the wall of immunity, within which the Jew had come to consider 'himself' to be sheltered, as God's special favourite, from that 'wrath of God,' which is 'revealed against all unrighteousness of men, who keep back the truth in iniquity,' he now goes on plainly to assert that no Jew is righteous, in the way he supposes, as a matter of right, by virtue of his descent or his works, but simply by the mercy of God, which gave his Father Abraham his righteousness, and gave his whole nation its righteousness, as an act of free grace, not of debt.

(vi) But that grace, he says, is not confined to the Jew, but extends to the Gentile also; for there is one God and Father of all, who will be just and loving alike to all.

(vii) Hence it has pleased God now, in the fulness of His own good time, to manifest that grace freely to all, as He did formerly in some measure to the Jews; and this He has done in the Gospel of His Son Jesus Christ.

(viii) But, though now first fully revealed, it was in His Son alone that God looked with favour upon Abraham of old, and the whole Jewish peo-

ple, and pronounced them to be righteous before Him. It was through Him alone, and His perfect righteousness, hereafter to be manifested, that God gave to them the gift of righteousness.

(ix) In fact, as he reminds them, Abraham received the gift while yet in a Gentile state, uncircumcised, and his circumcision was but a sign and seal of the grace already bestowed.

(x) The Jew, therefore, is as much concerned as other men in hearing of this gift of righteousness which is announced in the Gospel.

(3) But the gift is bestowed freely upon the whole human race; for, as all became sinners and subject to death in Adam, so shall all be made righteous, and be made sharers of the Life that is in Christ.

174. Thus then the 'good tidings of great joy for all mankind' is this divine announcement, that the whole human race are looked upon and dealt with as righteous creatures, in Jesus Christ their Head. The curse of their sinful nature has been taken away altogether—has been taken away from the first, though the fact is only now fully declared in the Gospel—by God's Fatherly Love. They are not looked upon as they are in themselves, but as they are in Him, in whom God Himself has loved and redeemed them. As by their natural birth from Adam they fell at once, as fallen sinful creatures, under a 'condemnation of death,' so by the free grace of God in Christ Jesus they shall receive, every one of them, a 'justification of life.' The gift of life, which all men possess, whether physical or spiritual, is itself a proof of this. They would not have had such gifts at all vouchsafed to them, if they had, indeed, been still lying under the curse, if they had not been redeemed, and made righteous. The present life, with all its blessings, is one portion of this gift of life, which all men partake of through the grace of God declared to us in Christ Jesus; the resurrection-life, which they will all share in, is another portion of this gift. But, above all, the spiritual life, which all men now partake of, each in his own measure, is another sign of that 'righteousness,' which God has given them. He Himself, the Father of Spirits, is everywhere enlightening and quickening the spirits of men. Every good thought, which has ever stirred within a heathen's mind, is a token of that work, which God's good Spirit is working within him, as one of the great Human Family, redeemed by the Love of God in Christ Jesus, and related all to the Second Adam by a second spiritual birth, (of which Baptism is the express sign and seal to the Christian,) as they are by their natural birth to the first Adam. And God's Blessed Will, in bestowing this 'justification of life' upon us, is this, that, making due use of that which is now vouchsafed to us, we may find His Grace still more abounding towards us, so that it 'may reign through righteousness unto Eternal

Life,'—so that the Christian, with his full light of the sun, and the heathen, with his feeble glimmering of daylight, it may be, yet each according to the grace bestowed upon him, 'continuing patiently in well-doing,' may receive the precious gift of 'Eternal Life.'

#### CHAP. VI. 1—4.

(1) What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin, so that grace may abound? Far from it. (2) We, who died to sin, how shall we any longer live in it? (3) Know ye not that we all, who were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into His Death? (4) We were buried, then, together with Him through the Baptism into death, so that, as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, likewise we also should walk in newness of life.

#### NOTES.

175. v. 1. *What shall we say then, &c.* The great doctrine of St. Paul requires now to be guarded from corruption, lest the grace of God be turned to lasciviousness. All men are redeemed, reconciled, brought back, made righteous, by the love of their Heavenly Father. Does it follow, therefore, that they will not be judged? that none of them will be condemned and punished? This was just the mistake which the Jews made. Because God had been pleased to single out their nation,—not to be made righteous exclusively, as they supposed, while all other nations were left to perish,—but to have God's gift of righteousness declared and made known to them, signed and sealed to them, while other nations were for a while left in ignorance of the gift, which was meant for them all, as well as for the Jews, and in fact was even then bestowed upon them all—they fancied, that, being righteous, God's people, God's children, they could not be judged and condemned as others, as those 'sinners of the Gentiles.' On the contrary, St. Paul means to tell them that the very gift of righteousness and sonship, which they had received, would only make their judgment heavier, and their punishment more severe, if they lived unfaithfully, if they walked unworthily of the grace bestowed upon them, if they 'kept back the truth,' which they knew so much more fully and clearly than others, 'in iniquity.' They would not be judged and condemned because of their sinful nature, because of their sins of infirmity

and ignorance. No son or daughter of Adam would be condemned for this. The whole human race is made righteous, and released from any fear of judgment on this account. This alone will be the condemnation of any, whether Jews or Christians or Heathens, that 'Light has come into the world,' come into their very midst, come into their very hearts; but yet 'they loved the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds were evil.'

Accordingly, the Apostle proceeds in this chapter to protect his teaching from any such perversion.

176. v. 2. *We, who died to sin.* We are so accustomed to put a particular meaning on the expression 'die unto sin,' that we are likely, without due attention to the context, to lose entirely the spirit of the words now before us, and the whole point of the Apostle's argument. We generally suppose that we are to 'die unto sin' by some resolute, determined, act of ours, or, rather, by a continued series of such acts, maintained throughout the whole life, by the help of Divine grace, explaining, however, the above language to mean that we are to *put sin to death*, to mortify the deeds of the flesh, to 'crucify the old man, and utterly abolish the whole body of sin.'

But the Apostle is not here speaking of anything which we have to do or have done, by any efforts of ours, by any act or exertion of our own. He is speaking of that which Christ our Head has done, of that which He has done for every man, of that which really and truly belongs to every man, but which by our Baptism is declared and ratified, as done for each of us, baptized Christians, individually.

The idea, which pervades the whole chapter, is this. St. Paul has just been saying that death came upon the whole human race through sin,—that we have all inherited from our earthly parent a sinful nature, and through that a necessity of dying,—that sin has, by our mere natural birth a right, as it were, to bring death upon us. Sin has 'reigned through death,'—that is St. Paul's expression,—sin has reigned, triumphed, revelled, as it were, inflicting death, over every member of the human race—even over infants, young children, and maniacs, who had never sinned wilfully after the similitude of Adam's transgression, but yet had inherited in their nature from him the taint of corruption, the seeds of death. Thus he has used a strong figure, to make more plain his meaning to us; he has personified sin, as he elsewhere personifies faith, hope, love, &c. He has represented sin as a sort of tyrant, which, by reason of our natural descent from Adam, has obtained dominion over us, with power to inflict death. So, in another place (Heb. ii. 14) we read of 'him that had the power of death, even the devil.' Maintaining still this figure, he here asks, 'We,

who have already died to sin,' who have already paid to sin that death, which it had a right to inflict upon us, how shall we any longer consent to live in it, and so bring ourselves again voluntarily beneath its power?

How then have we already paid this debt due to sin? In our Saviour Christ we paid it. He died not *instead of* us: but He died *for* us, on our behalf; He died unto sin once, He paid to Sin in His own person, as a Son of Man, that debt, which, if He really came to be a true member of the race, a true brother-man, He was bound, as any one of us, to pay,—bound by His own gracious act, in taking our nature, with all its weakness and feebleness, with its necessity of dying, though without its taint of sin. And we are reckoned so completely one with Him, and declared to be so in our Baptism, that His Death is regarded as ours. We have paid this debt to sin, the tyrant, because He, our Chief and Head, has paid it.

Of course, it is but a figure of speech to say that sin has by nature a claim upon us, that we by nature owe death, as a debt to sin. Dropping the metaphor, the real truth thus meant to be expressed is that our death is a consequence of the sinful taint, which we inherit in our nature—that we *must die because of our sin*. But our Lord was under no such necessity of dying, unless He willed to become wholly one with us, with us in our fallen, sorrowful state, with us in all things, except our sin. If He came thus to be made like unto His brethren, it was needful that He should die. And death, though to us the consequence of sin, has no necessary connection with sin; there is nothing impure or unholy in death, that a Holy Being should be defiled by it. To Him death was what it is to us now, the necessary painful passage for a human being out of this life to another, without any shadow of the *curse* to darken it. That the mere pains of death, the faintness of spirit, the shrinking of nature, are no signs of the curse, we must believe, because we know that in ages long before man's sin, the innocent brute creation suffered, as they do now. There is a mystery here, which we cannot explain; but the fact is certain, that suffering and pain and death itself were in the world before man's sin, and, therefore, they have no necessary connection with sin and the curse.

Thus, then, we see what our Lord's Death did for us. It did not do away with the necessity of our dying; for we must still die. But it did away with the necessity of our dying as *accursed creatures*, of our suffering death as a part of the curse, of our paying death as a debt, which sin had a right to demand of us. We are reckoned to have paid that debt. When our Lord, the righteous Son of Man, died, as if He were a sinner, as if He were by nature under the curse, as if He were under the necessity of dying, He 'died unto sin,' the Apostle tells us (vi. 10);



He recognised, as it were, the right of the tyrant to put Him to death, as a Son of Man. He paid the precious price of His Death for us, as a debt to sin, though He did not owe it, except for His Love's sake to us His brethren; and so dying, He paid, as our Head, a sufficient debt to sin the tyrant, to release us from any further necessity of paying. He paid this debt *on behalf* of us all, though He paid it not *in our stead*, that is, He paid it not in the way, in which we, unredeemed, should have had to pay it. He did not bear the weight of the curse; He did not suffer the accumulated weight of woe, due, as a punishment, to the sins of the world. St. Paul says not a word of this. What he says is the same as we find written in the Epistle to the Hebrews, namely, that He took our nature 'in order that by the grace of God he might taste death for every man' (Heb. ii. 9). 'For it became Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.' (Heb. ii. 10)—'Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that, through death, He might destroy him that had the power of death, even the devil.' (Heb. ii. 14.)

In other words, our Lord, through death, by dying as we sinners must die, declared most fully, by His Father's gracious Will, His brotherhood with us. And so, by the loving Wisdom of God, the cloud of guilty fear has been removed, which must otherwise have hung, by reason of the sin in our nature, between our souls and the blessed Face of our Most Holy and Glorious Creator. The curse has been utterly taken away; and all we of the human race, being recognised as one with our Head, are counted to be righteous as He is righteous, are made 'the righteousness of God in Him.' We shall die, indeed, still, but we shall not die under a curse; we shall die as righteous creatures, creatures freed from the curse, however they may need to be chastened. We shall die now, not because we must pay a debt to sin the tyrant, not because we must suffer it as a penalty, an awful doom, because of our sin; but because our Heavenly Father wills it, because we must follow the steps of our Blessed Lord, because, as He our Head and King and Elder Brother passed through the grave and gate of death, so must we pass also—they that have done good to a resurrection of life, they that have done evil, and have died in evil, to a resurrection of condemnation—to be beaten with few or with many stripes, as He shall order, who, in that day, as we are told, shall execute judgment, 'because He is the Son of Man.'

177. v. 3 *were baptized into His Death*, that is, were declared by our Baptism to have a share in His Death. Going down under the water, (as the custom was of Baptism in those days,) as into a grave, they were

'buried,' as it were, 'with Him by baptism into His Death.' It was a sign and symbol of their being so united to Him, that His Death became theirs, that, because He had died unto sin, they had died also. All men have thus a share in the precious Death of Christ their Lord; though the mass of human kind do not yet know the Love wherewith they are loved. But we, Christians, know it, and we have our Baptism as the assurance and pledge, the sign and seal, of all our Father's loving-kindness to us, the outward token of that other mightier sign and seal, the inward pledge of God's Love, which every living man has, namely, the secret work of His own good Spirit in the heart. Thus it is our Father's will for us, His children, to whom He has graciously revealed His message of life, that 'by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie,—by the outward visible sign and promise, and by the inward spiritual grace, the living witness of His Love within the heart—' we should, indeed, have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us in the Gospel.'

178. v. 4. *that, like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.* We all have a share in our Saviour's Life as well as in His Death; we have both died in the death of Christ our Lord, and been raised in His Resurrection. Such is the wonderful language which the Apostle uses. What He, our Head, did, that we, the members of His Body, share in—we, the whole brotherhood of Man,—we, the whole race, whose nature He took upon Him. So, then, he says, we have a 'new life' given us; we stand in new relations to God and His glorious Universe; we know now for certain that we are regarded, not as accursed, but as redeemed creatures. Behold! all things are become new to us. We are to walk henceforth, not hanging down our heads in fear and trembling and despair, but rejoicing as free and happy creatures, as children of God and brethren of Jesus Christ.

179. v. 4. *raised by the glory of the Father.* St. Paul speaks here, as elsewhere, of our Blessed Lord, not as raising Himself from the dead, or rising by His own inherent powers, but, as 'being raised by the glory,' by the glorious Might and Majesty, 'of the Father.' This is a point which he insists upon continually, that our Lord, when He came to be 'made sin,' to die as a sinful man on our behalf, gave up His human spirit in the hour of death into His Father's hands, as any one of us, His brethren, must do in our hour of death,—He 'trusted in God,' as any one of us must do,—and God did deliver Him, and raised Him from the dead, and, so raising Him, declared His good-will towards us all of the human race, declared that in Him, as a Man, our Brother, He was perfectly well pleased, and with us all in Him.

180. v. 4. *we also should walk in newness of life.* Though his words are true in their measure (v. 15—21) of all mankind, yet the Apostle is especially speaking here of Christians, to whom their Baptism is a sign and seal of their share in the death of their Lord, and also in His Resurrection-Life. This is expressed in the Church Catechism by saying that the inward spiritual grace, or free gift of favour, which is given us in Baptism, is ‘a death unto sin’ and ‘new birth unto righteousness.’ These words of the Catechism are often explained to signify that in our baptism is set forth to us our *duty* to die unto sin, to mortify and kill all vices in us, and so to walk in holiness of life, as becomes God’s dear children. Of course, it is true that we ought to do so; but just because we have already died unto sin, and risen again unto righteousness, in our very birth-hour, through the gracious gift of God, by that mysterious union with Christ our Head, which we all enjoy through the grace of our Heavenly Father, as members of the great human family, and by virtue of which we are partakers of the Death which He died, and of the Life which He now lives. That is the ‘death unto sin,’—our share in our Lord’s own ‘Death unto sin,’—and that is the ‘new birth unto righteousness,’—our share in our Lord’s own ‘Life unto God,’ (Rom. vi. 10.)—which are said to be *given* to us as the *inward spiritual grace*, set forth to us by the *outward visible sign* in our Baptism.

Light may be thrown upon this point by considering the language used in the Catechism in the case of the other Holy Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. In that case, the ‘inward spiritual grace,’ or free gift of favour, set forth to us by the Bread and Wine, is not something *in ourselves*, or something to be *wrought in ourselves*, but something *out of ourselves*, something that is given us *in Christ*, a share or participation in which our Father gives us as the free gift of His Love. The Body and Blood of Christ are represented to us by the Elements, whether we come to feed by faith upon them at that particular time or not. These things, *out of ourselves*, are set forth to us in that Holy Sacrament, as the source of all Life of every kind to us all, of all the blessings which we enjoy in our daily life, personal, family, social, or national—as the great provision of our Father’s Love for us, of which we are partaking, day by day, at every moment, as redeemed creatures, though we may not know it or may not heed it,—of which every man everywhere is partaking, though he may not know what the Word made Flesh has done at his Father’s bidding for the children of men. But, in that Holy Supper, these things are brought vividly before us by the ‘outward and visible sign’ of them; and we are called more closely and deeply to consider them, and to feed upon them in our hearts by faith. Whether we do feed by living faith upon them or not, at such times, these things are then set forth to us, as God’s free gift, His gift of grace, to the

children of men. We may thankfully use the precious gift, or we may sinfully abuse it, 'not discerning the Body of the Lord,' which the sign is meant to signify. But the point now to be noticed is that the 'inward spiritual grace' is not the effect wrought upon ourselves by coming to the Holy Sacrament, depending, therefore, on the spirit in which we come to it, but the Body and Blood of Christ, which are graciously given to us of God, which we may or may not faithfully partake of, which are given to us, however, and to all the human race, not only in the Sacrament, but at all times, and of which, in fact, all men are everywhere partaking, through God's mercy, and so receiving all the life they have, as redeemed creatures, whether they feed upon it by living faith or not, whether they know the precious gift of God's grace or not, whether they heed or disregard it.\*

In like manner, in Holy Baptism, the outward visible sign' of water, in which the person, in those days, was immersed or, as it were, buried, is the sin, indeed, of our dying and rising again, but this death and resurrection is not something *in ourselves*, or something *wrought in ourselves*, but something *out of ourselves*, something that is *given us in Christ*, which is set forth to us in the Sacrament of God's gift of grace, of which we are partakers, which is bestowed freely upon us and all mankind, and depends not in any way on the spirit in which we come or are brought to the Sacrament. That gift is a 'death unto sin,' which is given us because Christ died, and a new life, a 'new birth unto righteousness,' which is given us, and daily maintained in us, because Christ lives. So 'being by nature,' by our mere natural descent from Adam, 'children of wrath,' lying under a curse, 'we are hereby made,' that is, adopted, avouched, declared, taken formally to be, what in truth we were before from our very birth-hour, 'the children of God.' Before our baptism we were partakers of the Life and Death of our Lord, we were receiving daily supplies of mercy for body and soul, by virtue of His Body and His Blood, which our Father's Love has given to be the source of all blessing to the children of men. But we had no assurance that they might not be taken from us, by reason of our own manifold unworthiness, that we might not be left, at some time or other, in our hour of need, forsaken and forlorn. At all events, whatever we might reason out to ourselves, as many pious heathens have done, in order to assure our hearts before Him, by considering the signs of God's Goodness, and 'pondering these things,' and so coming to 'understand the Loving-kindness of the Lord,' it has pleased our Blessed Lord to order and appoint a special outward sign, to confirm the mercies of our God to us. In Baptism a gracious pledge is made to us, a right is given to us, that we may humbly claim a share in Christ's Life and Death, His Body and His

\* See "Sermon on the Eucharist" at the end of this volume.

Blood, at all times, as our Father's own free gift of grace to us. Hence it is said in the Catechism, that the 'inward spiritual grace' is *given* to us in either Sacrament, because it is then and there set forth and formally pledged, signed, sealed, and, as it were, made over to us.

Let us imagine that an earthly parent were to take and train among his own children, the child of another, perhaps, of some poorer family, and, on a certain day, were to go through a formal process of adoption, and *make* it his child. He may not change in the least, after that hour, his own bearing towards the child. He may treat it, after this formal adoption, with just the same kindness as before. The child may perceive no difference whatever in his dealings with it, except that, as it grows in years, it will begin more and more to understand and appreciate his love. In that love it may really have been as secure (excepting human accidents) before the adoption as after it. But here is the difference. The father has now put it out of his power to change his purpose towards the child, and *the child knows this*. He has given it two things now to trust in, his love so long experienced in the past, and his actual pledged promise for the future. Whereas, when it had done wrong at any time, a fear might have entered its bosom, that, after all, it might be sent away for its faults to its want and wretchedness again; and cut off from the family which it dishonoured, now the father, out of the kindness of his heart, has given an assurance that this will never be. It may stray from its path of duty, and for a while, it may be, absent itself as a prodigal from its home. It may even, in its madness of folly, renounce its claim upon the father's love. But he will ever reckon it as a child of the house; he will ever be ready to give it its place in his heart. He will chasten it, as a child, it may be; or he will go out and meet it, if need be, in after days, and fall upon its neck with tears and kisses, when he sees it returning in penitence, should it ever, in its wild self-will, have wandered away to the far-off land. But he will never forsake it. He has, in this formal act of adoption, declared the long-settled purpose of his heart. He has made it his child; and, as a child, it shall ever receive at his hands, notwithstanding all its faults, a father's tender pity, forgiveness, and love.

Just so our Heavenly Father's Love towards us does not depend upon our being baptized or not. Our baptism does but declare it, and assure it to us. It assures, and by His own gracious kindness, pledges his faithfulness to us, that we are, in very deed and truth, His children, that He has a Father's heart towards us. 'Being willing more abundantly to show unto us the immutability of His Counsel,' He confirms the secret purpose of His heart towards us by this outward sign. He *makes* us, adopts us, to be His children in Baptism; and gives us the right henceforward to claim with

humble reverence a Father's tender pity and forgiveness at His Hands. The 'rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness,'—all good and beautiful and blessed things around us,—the wayside flowers and the woods 'so full of song,'—all these have power to witness of our Father's Love to us, to say to us, 'Rejoice! Rejoice!' If we had no other ground of hope vouchsafed to us, a wise and pious heart might have reasoned, by 'pondering these things,' that they were tokens of a deeper mystery, 'outward and visible signs' of some most precious 'inward spiritual grace,' bestowed upon the children of men by their Creator. They might have been—these common things beside our daily pathway—a sign to us of our Father's Love, of which the seal is the work of His Spirit on our hearts, and on the hearts of all men. But our Baptism is the sign which Christ Himself has ordained to assure us of this, to confirm the testimony of all the glad tones of nature, to explain her more sad and sorrowful utterances. Our Baptism becomes thus a glorious reality,—not to separate us from our fellow-men, as if we were any better or safer than they, under one Father who loves us all,—but to rouse us up to earnest action in our daily paths of duty before Him, assured, as we are, ourselves, of His Love. Having now no fear of death, having paid the death already in our Lord which Sin, the tyrant, could have claimed, having 'died unto Sin' when He died,—and having also the joyous gift of a new life, because our Lord lives,—we are to go forth in the confidence that all men everywhere are sharing these blessings, though as yet they may not be privileged to know it—honouring our brother-men, whoever they may be, as members of the Great Human Family, whom God hath redeemed for Himself in His own dear Son,—and longing and labouring to tell them, in life and act, in our own persons, if we may, or by helping others in our name to tell them, of One Love, of which all earthly loves are telling, of which all precious thoughts are whispering in the very centre of their being, which embraces us all.

#### CHAP. VI. 5—11.

- (5) For, if we have become planted with (Him) in the likeness of His Death, so too shall we be (in that) of His Resurrection; (6) Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with (Him), so that the body of sin should be destroyed, that we might no longer serve Sin. (7) For he, who has died, has been emancipated from

Sin. (8) But, if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him ; (9) knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dieth no more ; death hath no longer mastery over Him. (10) For, in that He died, He died unto Sin once for all ; but, in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. (11) Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto Sin, but living unto God, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## NOTES.

181. v. 5. *so shall we be in that of His Resurrection.* We have here again the use of the future tense, which we have noted so often, and find again in verse 8, 'if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him'—implying that, though the *redemption*, which our Lord wrought for us by His Death, was wrought and completed at once, yet the *salvation*, which is now being wrought out by His Life, is a work progressing continually unto completion. It is plain that St. Paul does not mean, by the words now before us, that we shall be like our Lord in His Resurrection, merely because we shall be raised from the dead at the judgment-day ; because in v. 11 he bids us reckon ourselves to be *now* 'dead unto Sin, but 'living unto God,' as our Lord has once 'died unto Sin,' but now, being raised again, 'liveth ever unto God.' What he means, therefore, is that we shall be 'planted with' our Lord 'in the likeness of His Resurrection,' by having had a new life given us now, and by that life being continually maintained in us by the grace of God, after the likeness of Christ's Resurrection-Life. 'The *completion* of the promise is future ; but there is an *approximation* to it now. . . . The process being *gradual*, beginning as soon as he (the Christian) receives any portion of Christ's Spirit, advancing as he receives more, and perfected at death, the language used to describe his state is applicable, more or less fully, to different stages of his progress.' (*Vaughan.*)

182. v. 6. *our old man*, the Adam man, that which we should have been by nature, by our mere natural birth, if unredeemed by the grace of God in Christ Jesus. This 'old man' it is which has 'died unto Sin,' has paid in Christ the death which Sin had a right to claim—has been 'crucified with Christ'—that so the 'body of Sin should be destroyed,' the 'body of death,' as St. Paul calls it afterwards—that body which belongs, as it were, as a slave, to Sin, over which Sin would have had a right to rule,

with which the old man would have done the works of Sin, and earned, as wages, death, death all along, death in the doing of the work and after it. This body, according to the figure here employed, has been destroyed or done away, in the Death of Christ. We have no longer any such body belonging to Sin, wherewith its works can or ought to be done. The body which we now have is Christ's body, it belongs to Christ, it ought to be used in the service of Christ, by the new man, with the new life which we have given us, by our participation in Christ's Resurrection-Life. We may, indeed, take our bodies, which belong to Christ, and use them for Sin, and yield ourselves up again, body and soul, to do the will of the tyrant. But we are bound not to do so; we are set free from the thralldom of Sin. Sin has no more any power to claim dominion over us, to require us, as its slaves, to do its work and die.

183. v. 7. *for he, who has died, has been emancipated from Sin.* For one that has died, one who has paid to Sin that death, which it had power to claim of us by our natural birth, has by that act been set free, emancipated, from Sin. Sin has no more right to have further dominion over him, to treat him as its thrall, its bond-slave, any longer, or to bring death upon him any further.

184. v. 7. It is noticeable that St. Paul in this passage does not represent the necessity of death, which is a consequence of sin in our nature, as a doom which God inflicts upon the race—innocent as they must be, multitudes of them, babes and others, of all wilful sin. He carefully guards his words from this. It is Sin, the tyrant, who inflicts it—not God, the gracious Father of Spirits; it is 'the Devil,' who 'has the power of death,' who keeps 'many all their life-time subject to bondage.'

Of course, this personification of sin is but a figure of speech. But, nevertheless, it represents to us a very precious truth. It implies that the death of the human race is a necessary *consequence* of the sin in their nature, according to the moral order of the Universe, not a *doom*, which the Great and Blessed God, who is called in Scripture the 'Faithful Creator,' passes, as a judgment, upon His fallen creatures, however helpless, and innocent of real conscious guilt. It implies that when our Father permitted the human race to be propagated, so that it was brought, 'not willingly, but by reason of Him who subjected it,' under the inevitable necessity of death, as a sin-tainted race, He, at the same time, in his Eternal Counsels, gave the gift of new life to us all. He did away with the curse, and converted that death, which we must all die, into a blessing.

For death in itself, as before noted, is no sign of a curse. Death was in the world, for the countless races of animals and animalcules, ages before man's sin. There was no sign of curse in their death. Nor would the



death of man be attended with any notion of a curse attached to it, but for the consciousness of sin. The less we know or think of sin, the less we dread death; the more we know and think of sin, the more we dread it, unless we have the Light of God's Love in the Gospel to cheer us. As human beings, bound by ties of tender affection to one another, there is, of course, connected with death, the grief of separation from those whom we love. There is also, generally, the anticipation, and the actual sense, of pain and physical distress. But the sense of grief and pain is not the sense of a curse. And feelings of this kind are often overpowered by nobler feelings, quickened within the hearts of men, even heathen men, by the grace of God, though untaught, by more intimate acquaintance with the truth, as we Christians know it, to understand more fully the baneful nature of sin, and to bless God for its antidote revealed in the Gospel. How many thousands die on every battle-field, or in the active discharge of life's duties in every land, without any dread of death, as necessarily coupled with a curse! What notion of a curse embittered the glorious hours of those who fell, fighting for their homes and their fatherland, at Thermopylæ or Marathon? So, then, the idea of death is not necessarily connected in the minds of men with that of a curse.

But then comes the Law, and brings home to our consciences the sense of sin, of evil committed, against the light we had, and our better knowledge, and better resolves, before the Face of a Most Pure and Holy Being. And the Devil—the Slanderer—the Accuser of God and of the Brethren—makes use of this to fill our hearts with guilty fears, which keep us away from our Father's footstool. He teaches us thus to connect the idea of a curse with death. And many go trembling along the path of life, with the gloomy grave at the end of it, afraid to look the ghastly terror in the face. And so they turn their eyes ever, as it were, to the ground, as they go, and busy themselves closely with the petty things of this life, its business and pleasures, that they may for the present forget their fears, instead of making light of death, as they might, as they ought, and manfully pressing on to do the work of their Lord.

For how utterly unchristian, how utterly contrary to the whole spirit and letter of the Gospel, is this notion of death, as something to be dreaded, not merely for the pain, or present sense of separation from the objects of our love, which it brings with it, but for itself, for some idea of a curse attending it, as the carrying out of a fearful doom, a judgment from God, which Adam's sin has brought on his race! Separations take place continually in families, lifelong separations, for various reasons in the common path of duty, with grief of heart, no doubt, and the dropping of natural tears of pure affection, sometimes with bitter pain and anguish, but yet

without sense of awe or horror. Extreme pain is undergone under various circumstances, in the hospital-ward, on the battle-field, far exceeding in intensity that which we see to be generally connected with death. Often such pain is borne courageously and cheerfully, sometimes with fear and shrinking; but there is no sense of horror, no notion of a curse, mixed up with this fear. Now, if we read the New Testament rightly, we shall learn to look at the separation which death brings with it, and the pain which may attend it, in something of this temper. We shall learn to look upon death, as a Christian should do, as St. Paul did, who takes but little account of it, and makes very small provision in his letters for the comfort of bereaved friends, and none at all for the dying Christian himself, except to tell him that he has fought the good fight, and finished his course, and may now hope to enter into rest. Indeed, we make far too much of death in these days. We crown him King of Terrors, when our gracious God and Father has bereft him of all his power to harm us, has deprived him of his sting, and made him a messenger of grace to us.

Will it be said that after death still comes the judgment? Why, yes, and before death too. And this is the point, which we ought to bear in mind, not to prepare for *death*, but to prepare for *our Lord's appearing*, for His coming to judge us, as He may do at any moment, as He actually does, from day to day, from hour to hour, in the ordinary work of common life, as well as on special great occasions. The reason why we are so prone to connect this judgment only with death is this, that we cannot conceive of its actually taking place in this blessed world, where on every side we find a Father's Love. And yet it is really taking place from day to day even here. A Father's Hand is blessing continually, or chastening His children. But we feel as if we shall *then* stand before Him all alone, stripped of the countless gifts of His Goodness, which here relieve our fears, and are meant to do so under the Gospel of His Grace, but which are too often perverted into reasons for sinning yet more, and turned into lasciviousness. In truth, however, the 'judgment after death' is but the carrying on of that which is going on in life,—the manifestation of that which is now taking place, it may be in silence and secrecy,—the revelation of that Lord, who is even now, daily and hourly, taking account with His servants. Those, who never bethink themselves now of their Master's Presence, will, indeed, then see Him, perhaps, for the first time, who has been with them, speaking in their consciences, observing and overruling their doings, all along. And those, who have been consciously 'keeping back the truth in unrighteousness,' all their lives long, and have died, hardened in impenitence, may have reason to dread death, because it will bring them face to face with Him, whose Voice they have heard in their

hearts, whose Light shone upon their minds, whose Love they felt on every side, and yet they chose 'the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds were evil.' But even to such as these death itself has no curse attached to it. It is but the gate, through which their Lord and Master calls them to Him, that He may pass the righteous sentence of His Love upon them—that is, that He, who knows exactly what they are, in consequence of what they have done, may appoint for them that lot, that degree of purifying chastisement, which they need. And this, indeed, may be something fearful and terrific, as the needful rod is to children.

But Christians should learn to make light of death, as St. Paul did. Indeed, he tells us, 'we shall not all die.' And, as we do not couple the 'change,' which, St. Paul says, will pass on the bodies of some, by which 'this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality,' with any notion of a curse attached to it, so neither ought we to connect any such notion with death, as it will come to others. To 'die' or to 'be changed,' it is all one, it should be all one, to the Christian. How courageously and cheerfully may we go to the duties of life, whatever dangers they entail upon us, with this thought to sustain us, instead of shrinking and weakly wailing with fear at the idea of death! To the frail flesh, indeed, the form of death may be often terrible; but the thing itself ought not to be ever to the spirit. There are some, who will say 'good-night' to one another, and retire to rest, perhaps at early eve, perhaps at midnight, and who, on waking on the glorious morn, will put on their new apparel. There are others who will not go to rest at all, but, having watched all night, will rise up at once at the break of 'that day,' and be clothed upon, and mortality be swallowed up at once in life.

185. v. 8. *we shall also live with Him.* As noticed before (see note 181), the Apostle is not speaking here only or chiefly of our living with Christ hereafter. He is speaking of our living now with Him, in the likeness of His Resurrection-Life. He is speaking of that 'life unto God,' which is bestowed upon us as redeemed creatures, together with a 'death unto Sin,' as our portion in our Lord's own Life and Death, which was given us from the first moment of our existence, and of which our Baptism, therefore, is not the efficient agent, but the declaration, the sign and seal, to us, and withal 'a means of increasing it (Art. xxvii.) by virtue of prayer to God.' The future is used here, as in 181, and elsewhere so often, to imply that for this life we shall be continually depending, from moment to moment, on the Life of our Lord. The 'death unto Sin' is given us once for all. But the 'life unto Righteousness,' our life, as members of Christ our Great Head, as sharers in His Resurrection-Life, which began with the first moment of our being, though first formally given, assured, made over

to us, as God's blessed gift in our Baptism, is maintained in us, day by day, and *shall be* to the end, by His never-failing Life.

186. v. 9. *Christ, having been raised from the dead, dieth no more.* For Christ's Life, now that He is raised from the dead, we know, will not be yielded up again. He has paid to Sin that life, which He took as a human being. He died, as His Father willed it, as if He too had sin in His nature, like any one of the children of men. And so was His brotherhood with them completely exhibited; 'He was made perfect,' as their Head, 'through suffering.' And now He will die no more for ever: death has no more any power over Him. He 'died unto Sin,' He paid the claim of Sin, 'once for all;' and now 'He liveth unto God.' And, therefore, that 'life unto righteousness' which we have all received—which is as much a part of our inheritance, as human beings, from the Second Adam, as the sin in our nature was from the First,—that life will also be permanent. We are to reckon ourselves as 'dead to Sin,' as having died unto Sin, having paid to Sin, in our Lord's Death, that death, which the tyrant had a right to exact from us, 'but living unto God in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

#### CHAP. VI. 12—14.

(12) Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, unto obedience to it (Sin) in the desires of it (the body); (13) Nor do you surrender your members unto Sin as instruments of unrighteousness. But surrender yourselves unto God, as alive from being dead, and your members unto God, as instruments of righteousness. (14) For Sin shall not have lordship over you; for you are not under law, but under grace.

#### NOTES.

187. v. 12. *let not Sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, &c.* And what is the direct inference from all that has been said? Why, surely this. Let not Sin reign, lord it, as if it had any right to do so, in your mortal body, so that you should obey Sin in your natural bodily desires. Sin is there, no doubt; it is there in your nature: it will pretend to have a power over you, to have a power and a right to make you do its work with your bodily members, and receive, of course, its wages, death. And, so long as you continue in this 'mortal body,' thus it will ever be. Sin will take occasion by the desires of the body, its natural desires, to lord it

over you, and keep you in subjection, and treat you as its slaves. But do you boldly deny its claim. Do not allow it to play the king over you, and 'reign in your mortal body,' so that you should willingly comply with it in regard to the body's desires. Your body, though mortal, is no more a 'body of Sin;' it no longer belongs to Sin; it belongs to Christ. As a 'body of Sin,' it is dead, through your share in Christ's death. It is now a body of righteousness, wherewith you may present daily unto God a 'living sacrifice, which is your reasonable service.' Therefore, though Sin may vex you by its assertions of sovereignty, and now and then, perhaps, get the better of you for a season, yet do not let it 'reign,' 'do not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.'

188. v. 13. *nor do you surrender your members unto Sin, &c.* Do not *habitually* yield up to Sin, as your lord, those bodily members of yours, that they may do its work as instruments of unrighteousness. But yield yourselves unto God, as men who have died, but are alive,—who died unto Sin, when Christ died, but are now living unto God, because Christ lives,—and yield your bodily members unto God to do His work as instruments of righteousness. It is noticeable that the Greek word, which means 'surrender,' or 'yield up,' and which occurs twice in the above passage, is in the first instance used in the Present Tense, implying the easy habitual yielding, day by day, to the impulses of sin, as they prompt to evil, in the natural desires of the body; whereas, in the second instance, it is used in the Aorist, implying the vigour, energy, decision, with which we must resolve that this vile tyrant, who falsely claims from time to time to have power over us, shall not be obeyed at such times, shall not be allowed the use of our bodily members as instruments of unrighteousness.

189. v. 14. *for Sin shall not have lordship over you, &c.* Sin shall not have power to exercise lordship over you as its slaves, to treat you as such, and work its work of death upon you: for you are not slaves of Sin, but servants of Christ. Nay, however a man may choose in his corrupt heart to do the works of the flesh, and to serve Sin as a slave, instead of serving the Gracious Lord who bought him, yet for all that he is not really a slave of Sin, his body is not really a 'body of Sin,' a body belonging, as a thrall, to Sin. He has been 'bought with a price.' He belongs to the one true and only Lord of the children of men, and He will deal with His unfaithful servant as He sees best. Sin shall not have lordship over him—the right to treat him as its slave, the right to dispose of him, and work out its work of death upon him. The true Lord of that servant shall call for him, and reckon with him, and appoint him his portion as He sees right,—perhaps to be chastised and corrected by being cast into the outer darkness, 'where is the weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth.'

But to each faithful soul, using still this metaphor, the Apostle would say: 'Though you are conscious of Sin within you, of Sin in your nature, tempting you from time to time in the natural desires of the body, trying to bring you into bondage—and though you are conscious also, not only of these impulses to evil, but of times also when you have yielded to the impulse, of sinful thoughts and words and acts, enough to darken all the joy of your spirit's life, to bring you under the heavy judgment of the law, and force you to cry out against yourself, 'Unclean! Unclean!'—yet fear not, my brother; remember that, for all that, you are not a slave of Sin, but a servant of Christ, and a child of God; you are not under the Law, but under Grace—under Mercy and Love, forgiving and embracing you. When Sin, as it were, is dragging you away in its clutches, conscious of the past evil you have done, of the miserable weakness by which you have yielded to temptation, of the utter wretchedness and helplessness of your condition, —when the Slanderer brings the just and holy Law to bear upon you, and tells you that a creature so impure and defiled, so enslaved, as it would seem, in the service of the Evil One, cannot ever hope to enter into the Presence of the Blessed God, to behold the Face of the King afar off in His Glory,—then bethink you of the birthright which belongs to you, 'through the loving-kindness towards man of God our Saviour'—your birthright, as a man, fallen, indeed, in Adam, but redeemed in Christ. Remember that you have no need to lie thus bound, in the thralldom of Sin. Sin has no right to claim this lordship over you. Take with you words of hope, of living trust in your Father's Love, and say, "Sin shall not lord it over me; for I am not under Law, but under Grace. Let the Law say what it will; it is not for me; it is for 'murderers and men-stealers,' for all such as 'keep back' wilfully 'the truth in unrighteousness.' And that I will do no longer. In myself, I know, I have no strength whatever to refuse the claim of Sin, to resist its power. But He still lives who is our King and Head; and, because He lives, we shall all live also. His Death I have a share in; in Him I have died to sin; and Sin cannot claim from me a second death, because of my bearing about with me a fallen nature. His Life also is mine; and the very sense, which I have, of my own sinfulness, is a sign of that Life being even now imparted to me—is a token that my Father loves me, though most unworthy to be loved. Because the Lord of man liveth, I *can* refuse, and every man living can refuse, to be the slave of sin. I will not let it reign then in this my mortal body. I will not obey it in my body's desires. Though I may not be able, through the weakness of the flesh (see note 195), perfectly and all at once to do this, yet I will renounce obedience to the lusts of the flesh, I will not *fulfil* them."

## CHAP. VI. 15—20.

(15) What then ? Shall we sin, because we are not under Law, but under Grace ? Far from it. (16) Know you not that, to whom ye are surrendering yourselves slaves unto obedience, slaves ye are to him whom ye obey, whether of Sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness ? (17) But thanks be to God that ye were slaves of Sin, but ye obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine, into which ye were delivered over ; (18) and, being set free from Sin, ye were enslaved to Righteousness. (19) I mean what is human (humanly possible), because of the weakness of the flesh. For, as ye surrendered your members slaves to Impurity and Lawlessness unto lawlessness, likewise now surrender your members slaves to Righteousness unto sanctification. (20) For when ye were slaves to Sin, ye were free from Righteousness.

## NOTES.

190. v. 15. *What then ? Shall we sin, because we are not under Law, but under Grace ?* Shall we thus turn the loving mercy of our God into an excuse for lasciviousness, living loosely and carelessly, because the judgment of the Law is no longer to be dreaded, because we know that we are children of the House, and have a place, all unworthy as we are to have it, in the heart of our Heavenly Father ? God forbid !

191. v. 16. *Know you not that, &c.* Do you not perceive that whoever gives himself up to do the work of any master, as an obedient slave, is practically the slave of that Master, whatever he may call himself, whatever he may have a right to call himself ? And, remember, all that can result from being 'a slave of Sin,' from 'keeping back the truth in iniquity,' is death—a gloomy sense of guilt and unrighteousness, a gradual darkening of the mind, and hardening and deadening of the heart, a deepening consciousness of separation from the Holy and Blessed One, the Fountain of all Light and Life to His Creatures ; whereas the result of

'obedience' to the truth, which God has revealed to you, whether by the written word or by the secret teaching of His Spirit, the 'end of walking in the Light as He is in the Light,' is 'Righteousness'—the realisation and enjoyment of that gift of righteousness, which is yours as redeemed creatures, a sense of fellowship with God, a cheerful, happy freedom of the soul, in the enjoyment of His favour, as righteous creatures, as children of His Love.

192. v. 17. *thanks be to God that ye were slaves of Sin, &c.* 'There was a time, indeed, when you did thus surrender yourselves to be, practically, the slaves of Sin, and yielded up your members to do its will.' The Apostle is, of course, not speaking of *all* among them, but is speaking generally of what would have been the case with many of his readers, before their conversion from a state of heathenism. When writing to the Corinthians, (although the Church of Corinth was in a very defective state at the time he wrote,) he says only, speaking of the corruptions of their former heathen state, 'And such were *some* of you.' So here, speaking generally, he says, 'Once, in the days of your heathenism, you did yield yourselves up to that hateful tyrant to do his will. But, thanks be to God! you obeyed from the heart, with sincerity of purpose, however imperfectly through the weakness of the flesh, the form of doctrine into which you were delivered over.' And here, too, he is, no doubt, speaking charitably of them all, in the fervour of his love to them, speaking what he could not know, but what he hoped and believed of them all.

193. v. 17. *you obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine into which you were delivered over.* What form of doctrine was this? He cannot be speaking of the pure Christian doctrine, into which the converts from heathenism at Rome had not yet been 'delivered over,' as appears plainly enough from all that he has been writing, and all that he has still to write. He must mean that Jewish doctrine, which they had imbibed at first, and afterwards mixed with a certain infusion of Christianity. This Jewish training had taught them many precious lessons, though mixed with many fables and corruptions of the truth. But they had 'obeyed it from the heart.' They had renounced their idolatrous rites and vicious practices, and, in obedience to the truth which had reached their hearts, they had earnestly striven to lead a new life, as became the servants of Jehovah. They were not of the number of those, who 'kept back the truth in iniquity,' or to whom the severe language of the Apostle, in various parts of the epistle, is meant directly to apply; though, indirectly, he does desire to warn them against those fatal errors, into which the most pious of them might be easily drawn, by the example of the true-born Jews, with whom they were daily associating. For their ready obedience to the truth, as



hitherto brought home to their consciences, the Apostle gives thanks. They had done their best with the light which God had given them. And the time was now come for a fuller stream of Divine Illumination to be poured upon their eyes.

“‘You readily obeyed the mould into which you were poured, as it were, like soft, ductile, and fluent metal, in order to be cast and take its form. You obeyed the mould, you were not rigid and obstinate, but were plastic and pliant, and assumed it readily.’ The metaphor suggested itself to the Apostle in the city of Corinth, where he was writing, which was famous for casting statues in bronze.” *Wordsworth*.

The use of the Greek Aorist in this verse and the next shows that the Apostle is referring to a single act, to the decisive action which they took at the time of their conversion, or, perhaps, to separate acts, by which they had embraced, from time to time, the truth, as it more fully reached them.

194. v. 18. *and being set free from Sin, ye were enslaved to Righteousness*. When the word of God's truth and grace had come home to you, and you believed and obeyed it, you refused to be any longer the slaves of Sin; you felt that Sin was not to be your lord, that you were set free from its tyranny, that you were no longer obliged to obey it, nor compelled to yield up your members to do its work; and with a willing heart you yielded up yourselves and your members as ‘slaves unto Righteousness.’

It might seem, at first sight, that he is using here the word ‘Righteousness’ in a different sense from that in which he has employed it all along, if we judge merely from the words with which he contrasts it. Thus in v. 16 it is opposed to ‘death,’ in vv. 18 and 20 to ‘Sin,’ and in v. 19 to ‘impurity and lawlessness,’ which may be considered as another amplified expression for Sin. These variations might, of course, be explained by the fact that St. Paul couples closely in his mind the idea of *sin* with that of *death*, and the idea of *righteousness* (uprightness, goodness) with that of *life*, and opposes the one set of ideas to the others. But, on closer consideration it will appear that he is not using the word here in this sense, as directly antithetical to ‘sin,’ but in that sense in which he has been using it all along, namely, to express ‘God's gift of righteousness,’ the righteousness which God gives in His Son, which being a gift of life, (a ‘justification of life,’ as he calls it,) he employs as antithetical to sin and death, sufficiently so, at least, for the apostle's manner of writing. That this latter, though not the most obvious, is the true interpretation of St. Paul's meaning in this passage, seems to be confirmed by the language which he uses afterwards in x. 3,—‘seeking to establish their own righteousness, they were not subjected unto God's Righteousness,’—where the expression,

'God's Righteousness,' is, evidently, the same which he has been repeating all along. Here, then, God's Righteousness is personified as a lord or master, just as in the passage now before us. And the phrase, 'subjected unto God's Righteousness,' exactly corresponds with that here used, 'enslaved unto Righteousness,' which expression he changes, in v. 22, into 'enslaved unto God.'

195. v. 19. *I mean what is human, because of the infirmity of your flesh.* When I say you became 'enslaved to righteousness,' I mean 'humanly speaking,' with such allowance as human weakness, the weakness of your flesh, must call for. I know you cannot, as fallen creatures, in your present state of being, perfectly fulfil the will of your rightful Master. The things that you would, I know by my own experience, you often do not, and you do the things you would not. Though washed by God's grace, and cleansed from the pollution of your former servitude, you will still have daily to 'wash your feet,' and confess before God the faults of which you are daily conscious. But you obeyed the truth, as you came to know it, with the heart, with sincerity of purpose and a single eye. You come now to the light continually, that all the remainder of corruption may be purged out of you, and all your deeds be 'made manifest, that they are wrought in God.'

196. v. 19. *for, as ye surrendered your members, &c.* 'Without meaning, then, that you can perfectly do this, yet, as you once gave up yourselves *heartily* to be the *willing* slaves of Sin, yielding your members up to impurity and lawlessness, so as to become each day more lawless and impure in heart, so now give up yourselves *heartily*, with the like ready zeal, to be the willing slaves of Righteousness, and grow thereby each day in holiness.'

197. v. 20. *for, when ye were slaves of Sin, ye were free from Righteousness,* that is, free with respect to Righteousness. 'For, of course, you could not serve two Masters at once. While you were willing servants of Sin, and therefore practically its slaves, you could not be servants of God and His gift of Righteousness; you were renouncing the grace of God as your Master, and repudiating its claim to rule you, as one of God's family and household.'

#### CHAP. VI. 21—23.

(21) What fruit had ye then in those things, at which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. (22) But now, being freed from Sin, and enslaved unto God, ye have your fruit unto holi-

ness, and the end (is) Eternal Life. (23) For the wages of sin *is* death; but the free gift of God *is* Eternal Life, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## NOTES.

198. v. 21. *What fruit had ye then, &c.* All the fruit, all the enjoyment, which you had in those days, in the practice of those things, which now it shames you to think of, could have been only a little guilty pleasure for a season. But the end of those things, that which they were really working in you at the time, that which they result in necessarily by the laws of the moral universe, is death—that death which is the opposite of the Life Eternal here spoken of, Eternal, Spiritual Death, the sense of separation from God, and from the Light and Life and Joy of His Presence,—which is the sure result of wilful, indulged, sin of any kind, and becomes more dark and fearful, as the power of evil over its voluntary slave becomes daily more confirmed.

199. v. 22. *but now, being freed from Sin, &c.* ‘But ye have shaken off this accursed bondage. You have heard the message of your Heavenly Father, and claimed your freedom as God’s servants, and the hold of Sin was loosened at once upon you, and you ceased to be its slaves. And in the service of God and His Righteousness, under the happy government of His Free Gift of Grace, which binds you under a law of loving obedience, you find your fruit, your Joy, in daily increasing holiness of heart and life. You feel a growing strength within you, a strength which God gives you, to do the things you would, and refuse to do the things you would not. You feel your peace grow deeper day by day; and the end of all, that which is being daily wrought in you, and shall live, as the permanent result, when time shall be no longer, is Life Eternal, that life which is given us in Jesus Christ, that we should know Him, who is the only true God, revealed to us in His Son.

200. v. 23. *For the wages of Sin is death; but the free gift of God is Life Eternal, in Christ Jesus our Lord.* The wages of Sin, that which Sin will work in you for doing its will, is death. [Observe that here again, as before (see note 184), the Apostle refers this death to the accursed tyrant Sin, and not to the Gracious and Blessed God.] But the free gift of God, that which we do not deserve and cannot earn, by any labour of ours,—(for, when we offer of our best, we do but offer that which He gave us pure and perfect, which we have defiled, more or less, by our sinfulness)—that which He gives us of His own gracious purpose, out of the overflowing fountains of His Love,—is Life Eternal, in His dear Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

## CHAP. VII. 1—4.

(1) Do you not know, brethren, (for I speak to men knowing law,) that the law has power over a man so long as he liveth? (2) The wife, for instance, is bound by law to her husband while he lives; but, if the husband have died, she is discharged from the law of her husband. (3) So then, while the husband lives, she will be called an adulteress, if she become another husband's; but, if her husband has died, she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress, though having become another's. (4) Just so, my brethren, you too were put to death to the law by the body of Christ, so that you should become another's, even His, who was raised from the dead, that so we might bring forth fruit unto God.

## NOTES.

201. The Apostle has just been likening Sin to a tyrant, who lords it over us by nature, as if we were its slaves, bound to do its work and take its wages. He has taught us how, by the death of Christ, we are set free from the claim of that tyrant, and redeemed for God's service, and ought now to render up ourselves in loving obedience to God's blessed will, and we shall receive His gracious gift, Eternal Life in Christ Jesus our Lord. But how does Sin get such a power to lord it over us? The strength of sin is the Law. Sin has power to enslave, torment, and kill us, because of the existence of God's Holy Law, which pronounces us to be guilty, disobedient creatures, as our sin-stricken hearts too surely feel,—which, with its perfect requirements, make demands upon us such as we cannot fulfil. So the Devil drives us to despair. We feel that we cannot 'do these things and live;' and we are tempted to give up the hopeless struggle, and to fall back helplessly into the clutches of Sin, to do its hateful work, 'curse God, and die.' Such is the way in which the pure and holy law of God, brought home to the conscience, is used by the Slanderer, to work death in us. It is very noticeable, as before observed, that St. Paul does not say that the *Law* dooms us to death, as the punishment of our faults. He says

that *Sin* takes advantage of the existence of a Holy Law, to bring death upon us, to get us to do its work and so receive its wages. Death is not represented as the just retribution inflicted upon sinners, by an angry God, but as the natural, inevitable, consequence of their choosing to continue as slaves of Sin, a consequence flowing from the necessary eternal laws of the moral universe.

The Apostle proceeds to explain the matter by the use of another figure. The Law, he says, was by nature the husband of the soul: it has a right, as a husband, to lay its commands upon us, and we feel that we ought to obey it; for they are holy, just, and good. But its commands are impossible to be obeyed by us; the soul of man must utterly despair of pleasing its first husband, the Law: it would inevitably fail in its duty, and form, in its madness and despair, a vile adulterous connection with Sin, which (and not the blessed Law of God) will bring it to ruin, misery, and death. But the first husband of man's soul is dead, says the Apostle, which metaphor, feeling it to be not quite correct, he afterwards modifies, (introducing thereby a little obscurity into his reasoning,) and corrects it by saying that the soul itself has died to its first husband. The first life of the soul came to an end when we died in Christ, (such is the Apostle's figure,) and the claim of its first husband, the Law, came then also to an end. The soul is now married a second time to another Husband, in another life, in that new life which it lives, united to Him whom God hath raised from the dead, by virtue of the share which God has given it in Christ's Resurrection-Life.

202. v. 1. *I speak to men knowing law*—law generally, not the Jewish law.

203. v. 2. *the wife is bound by the law to her husband while he lives.* The Apostle's meaning is sufficiently plain; but there is here a little confusion in the statement of his argument. He has changed, inadvertently, the line of thought, which he was pursuing in the first verse. And now, instead of the person dying, and the law losing its hold upon him, the illustration he here gives is that of the *husband* dying, and the law so losing its hold upon the *wife*. However, when he comes to the practical illustration, in verse 4, he returns to the original supposition, and represents to us that *we* have died, and so are released from the claim of our former husband, the law, though he is still living, that we may be married to a new husband, even Jesus Christ.

204. v. 4. *you were put to death to the law by the body of Christ, &c.* 'By the body of Christ,' (in which is implied all the humiliation connected with His taking a body in our nature, and all the obedience which He rendered in it, even unto death,) you died; you were put to death to your

old life when He was given for you, when He came of His Father's will to take a human body, to become a Son of Man, to live and die as a brother of your race. And now it is your Father's Will, in thus giving His Son for you, that you should be His henceforward. He will look upon you as one with Him, united to Him, married to Him, who has not only died, but been raised from the dead by the power of God, that we may all have life, because He, our Head, lives, and by virtue of the fresh supplies of life, which flow from this blessed union, may bring forth fruit abundantly to God.

### CHAP. VII. 5—6.

(5) For, when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were by reason of the Law, wrought in our members, so as to bring forth fruit unto death.

(6) But now we were discharged from the law, having died to what we were held in, so that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in oldness of letter.

#### NOTES.

205. v. 5. *when we were in the flesh, &c.* While we lived in the flesh, that is, in our natural state, without knowledge and realisation of our redeemed state, and subject, as we felt ourselves to be, to that righteous Law, whose voice came home with power to our consciences, as holy, just, and good, and so made us aware to some extent of our duty, and aware also of our delinquency, the 'passions of sin. the sinful passions, which are in us, in our fallen nature,—which lie dormant until called out into energetic action by reason of the existence of the pure and holy Law, and the sense we have of its requirements,—waked up into perverse opposition to that which we knew to be right, and wrought in our members, as organs or instruments, so that we brought forth fruit, not unto God, but unto Sin and Death.

206. v. 6. *having died to what we were held in*, to that in which we were held. This is the sense of the approved reading of the original, instead of that which is given in the English version, 'that having died, in which we were held.'

207. v. 6. *in newness of spirit*, in newness of life, under the gracious influence of God's Spirit, so that we too, in spirit, like children, render a loving, though, at the best, imperfect obedience to a Father's word, receiv-

ing life freely from Him, as His own gracious gift to us, *not in the oldness of the letter*, as men who have only a code of laws delivered to them, by perfect obedience to which (such as they can never render) they might obtain the life which their spirits need and long for.

208. The language of St. Paul in this place throws light on a very difficult passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews, ix. 16—19. It seems certain that the Greek word in these verses should be translated, not *testament*, as in the English Version, but, as it has been all along, 'covenant,' or rather 'disposition,' 'arrangement,' in which the one party graciously promises to give, and the other is willing humbly to receive. Now, in the previous verse, the writer to the Hebrews, (most probably St. Paul himself, or, at all events, one thoroughly accustomed to the reasoning, and steeped in the spirit, of St. Paul,) had been saying that Christ is a 'mediator, or manager, of a *new arrangement*, that so, death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions committed under the *first arrangement*, we, who have been called to enjoy the blessings of the new one, may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.' 'For,' says he, '*where there is an arrangement*,' (already in existence, the 'first arrangement,' just spoken of,) *there must needs be reported the death of him who arranged* ;—that is, before any new arrangement can be made, it is necessary that, in some way or other, the only party to the first arrangement, who could die to it, namely the Jewish believer, (the other party being the ever-living God,) should die to it. '*For an arrangement is valid*,' that is, a new arrangement can be made and take effect, '*in the case of dead persons*,' with persons who have died to the old one; '*since it has no force at all, while he, that arranged, liveth*,' while the only party to the first arrangement, that could die to it, is still alive to it. '*Whence neither has the first arrangement been ratified* (the Greek word implies ratified, established, as something *new*) *without blood*.' The first arrangement was to the people of Israel a new one, just as the second is to us, Christians. By that they were 'called' to enjoy the blessedness of a covenant-relation with God, which other men were not permitted to share in. And, in order to this, it was necessary that they also should have set before them the fact, that death was necessary to get rid of the claims, which the pure and perfect Law had upon them in a state of nature. By the sacrifices of the Mosaic Law it was expressed continually that the worshippers had already died before God to that Law, in the death of Him who was to come, but was slain in God's purpose from before the foundations of the world : and so the Law had lost its hold upon them, to judge and condemn them.

## CHAP. VII. 7—11.

(7) What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? Nay, not so! Yet I knew not sin, but through Law. Desire, for instance, I knew not, but that the Law said, 'Thou shalt not desire.' (8) But Sin, taking occasion by means of the Commandment, wrought in me all manner of desire. (9) For, apart from Law, Sin is dead: so I was living, apart from Law, once; but when the Commandment came, Sin revived, and I died; (10) and the Commandment, meant for life, turned out to me, that same, for death. (11) For Sin, taking occasion, by means of the Commandment, beguiled me, and, by means of it, slew me.

## NOTES.

209. v. 7. *is the Law sin?* Do I then make the Law out to be Sin, by thus coupling it with Sin, and representing that, by means of it, Sin works its evil work in us, and brings death upon us, as the natural and necessary consequence, the wages, of that work, which we do as its willing slaves? Is it the holy Law of God, which is given for life, is it God Himself our Father, the giver of that Law, who slays us? God forbid! It is Sin—Sin, the hateful tyrant and destroyer—the Devil, 'that hath the power of death.' But, however, the Sin in my nature would have been dormant, would have had no opportunity of exerting its baneful activity, if there had not been Law, a holy and blessed Law, which it could tempt me to depart from and disobey. 'I knew not Sin, but through Law,'—either written on the heart, or revealed to the conscience in some other way. St. Paul is musing, as it were, within himself, and, by reciting his own deep experience, is telling that of all earnest men in all ages, with more or less of truth and actual resemblance, according as they have been more or less enlightened to see the perfect excellence of God's Law.

210. v. 7. *desire*, evil desire of any kind, lust, concupiscence.

211. v. 8. *Sin, taking occasion by the Commandment, wrought in me all manner of desire.* The perverse character of the sin in my nature was shown by its instantly urging me to desire what I knew was wrong and



evil; it 'took occasion,' by the Law showing me what was good, to stir up in me the desire to do the very opposite.

212. v. 9. *apart from Law, Sin is dead.* Where there is no law, where there is no consciousness of right or wrong, no sense of duty, Sin cannot act; though it may be there in the nature, it cannot take effect in the life, it is practically dead (as in the case of infants, insane persons, &c.).

213. v. 9. *I was living, apart from Law, once.* Before the Law came home with power to my heart, I was living; I was happy enough in my ignorance; I thought all was right with me; I was not conscious of any sickness of the soul, much less of death. But this could not last. The time must come, for every man, sooner or later, when this state of mere animal existence must come to an end, and he must be awakened by the living word of God, 'sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart,'—and roused to a sense of his duty, and alas! of his delinquency also. The heathen, in their measure, have this experience, as well as others. But the Apostle is here addressing himself to pious Jews and Jewish proselytes, well trained in matters of religion, and earnestly desiring, as he believed, to do the will of God, and live. He is explaining to them the secret movements of their own hearts, by telling of his own experience; and in this way also is seeking to shatter their confidence in their own meritorious righteousness, and to lead them on to appreciate more fully that blessed gift of righteousness, which our Father's Love bestows on us in the Gospel. He is sure that they too have found that they could not secure the life, which they longed for, by their own obedience to God's perfect Law,—that they too must have often felt, that, when wishing to do good, evil was present with them,—that they must have been constrained at times to cry out with himself, 'wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?'

214. v. 9. *when the Commandment came, Sin revived, and I died.* When the word of God came home to my heart, and I saw with a deeper insight what kind of service the holy requirements of the Law demanded, the evil in my nature 'revived,' gained, as it were, new life and vigour, sprung up at once into activity. It stirred in me all manner of desire to do what I now knew to be wrong; and so, doing evil, I became conscious of a weight of guilt upon my soul, and this sense of guilt,—of the evil in my nature, of my inability to resist it, and of the bitter consequences of yielding to it,—became ever more heavy upon me. Thus I felt more and more under the power of Sin. I became its thrall, and groaned under its horrible tyranny. I felt that Sin was a reality, that it had a fearful energy

and vitality, that I was falling more and more under its power, that it was working in me shame, misery, and death; 'Sin revived, and I died.'

216. v. 10. *And the Commandment, &c.* Thus that very Commandment, which was given me for life, by the opposition which my fleshly Adam-nature roused to it, and by the despair engendered through my fruitless efforts, by reason of the sinful taint in my nature, to do what I knew to be good, and eschew what I knew to be evil, turned out to be effective only for producing death.

216. v. 11. *for Sin, taking occasion by the Commandment, beguiled me, and, by means of it slew me.* For Sin, seeing that there was a Commandment, which had come home to my heart, so that I knew what was right and good by means of it, made use of that very knowledge of mine to exert its abominable power upon me. Just as, in the primeval story of our race, the Serpent is represented as knowing that our first parents had a commandment, and were fully aware of it, and beguiling the weaker one to transgress that very commandment, bringing death upon them both thereby, so the Sin in my nature beguiled me to transgress that very will of God, which my conscience knew of,—it told me, as the serpent told Eve, that I should not surely die for committing this one act of disobedience, that I should gain some immediate pleasure and benefit from it,—and so it brought death upon me, a sense of shame and uneasiness, a sense of separation from God, a sense of gloom and guiltiness, increasing and deepening ever more and more, with each fresh act which I wrought in that accursed slavery.

Notice again that it is not the Blessed Law that kills, but Sin, that takes occasion by the Commandment, and, by means of it, slays us.

## CHAP. VII. 12—20.

(12) So then the Law is holy, and the Commandment holy, and just, and good. (13) Has then that which is good become to me death? Nay, not so! But Sin, so as to appear Sin, by means of that which is good, working out death, so that Sin might, by means of the Commandment, become exceedingly sinful. (14) For we know that the Law is spiritual; but I am fleshly, sold under Sin. (15) For, what I work out, I do not allow; for not, what I will, that do I,

but, what I hate, that do I. (16) But if, what I will not, that I do, I agree to the Law that it is good. (17) But now no longer I work it out, but Sin dwelling in me. (18) For I know that there dwelleth not in me, that is in my flesh, *anything* good ; for to will is present to me, but to work out what is beautiful, I find not. (19) For the good, which I will, I do not ; but the evil, which I will not, that I do. (20) But, if I do that which I will not, it is no longer I that work it out, but Sin dwelling in me.

## NOTES.

217. v. 13. *So as to appear Sin*, so as to appear in its true character as Sin, so as to exhibit its true nature of perverse wilfulness, so as to show itself, by making use of a blessed commandment, to be Sin in very deed and truth, 'exceedingly sinful.'

218. v. 14. *We know that the Law is Spiritual*. The Law is 'spiritual ;' it has to do with the spirit of man, and with those things which belong to the spirit, with righteousness, and purity, and truth, and love. It requires also this spirit in man, endowed with the proper faculty for receiving its admonitions, who shall attend and give heed to its teachings, and by whose instructions, as it were, man's will shall be directed, and by whose living force, derived from the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, the man shall be enabled to keep the body in subjection to the Law of God, its Maker. Now this spirit in man is breathed into us, with the first breath of new life, which the Spirit of God imparts to us all, as redeemed creatures. It is *the* gift of life, which is given us in Christ Jesus. All the sense, which we have, of the 'beauty of holiness,'—all admiration, and secret love, in our very heart of hearts, of that which is 'good, and true, and just, and pure, and lovely, and of good report,' even while we may perversely be choosing and practising the opposite,—we have because of the existence of this spirit in us, because we are spiritual beings, because we have had this spiritual life quickened in us, by our Father's grace, by virtue of our relation to our Head. All men, then, have this spirit, this spiritual life, though all men may not realise it to themselves nor exhibit it to others. In some it may be as yet *undeveloped*, as in infants,—in others, *suspended, disenabled or suppressed*, as in persons asleep, insen-

sible, or insane, in whom the spirit is unable to act upon the will in a consistent and normal manner, because of some defective physical arrangements. So too, in persons such as St. Paul, when he was 'living, apart from the Law once,' as yet not thoroughly quickened by the word of God coming home with power to his heart, the spirit is *dormant*, and not yet roused into energetic action. The man is hardly conscious of his spiritual life; he has not yet had with his heart those awful communings, which become a creature born for eternity. His spirit, though it be not dead, has not yet been waked into active living exercise, by the touch, as it were, of the Spirit of God. He is, *practically*, still in 'the flesh,' in his natural state, unconscious of the grace of God, and the gift of spiritual life by grace, of which he, as a redeemed creature, is partaking, and in the strength of which, ever renewed from the fulness of life in Christ Jesus, he can break off the chains of Sin, and refuse to be its slave.

219. v. 14. *I am fleshly, sold under Sin.* St. Paul is still thinking of himself in his former state, not as he was at first, when he was 'living apart from the Law,' but as he was when the Law had come home to him, and he saw something of its perfection and beauty, and his spirit rejoiced in it, and his will desired it, but, being beguiled by Sin into disobedience, he fell into despair, and under the slavery of Sin and Death. In this state, knowing nothing of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, by which his spirit would be kept alive continually, and strength supplied to him to refuse to be the slave of Sin, it seemed to him that he was but a fleshly creature, one sold by the very conditions of his birth, as one of a fallen race, under the power of Sin.

St. Paul's words here, as before, will correspond more or less exactly to the experience of all earnest men, in proportion as their eyes are enlightened to see the Holiness of the Divine Law, and their own deficiency. Such a feeling, as he has here expressed, must often be the feeling of any man, who, without the revelation of God's grace, becomes awakened to the sense of his duty, and again and again is made deeply conscious how much he comes short of it. He knows nothing of the life of the spirit, that spiritual life which has been given to us, and will be maintained in us, because Christ lives, though, in fact, he feels its presence within him, continually prompting him to good, and warning him from evil. But, every time he is seduced into sin, it seems as if he must lie down in the dust, and die, as if he were only fleshly, sold as a bond-slave under Sin. It is true, all the while, that such a person is *not* really a mere fleshly creature, is *not* sold under Sin. The very sense he has of his misery shows this—shows that the spirit is there, and is alive within him. The very groaning of his soul, while he feels the accursed power of Sin, and writhes under the hateful

bondage, is a sign that he is not born to be a slave of Sin, that his rightful Master is even now claiming him, that he has even now, though he does not yet know it, a right and a power to shake off the fetters of Sin, and rise up rejoicing, as a freed man of Christ. Sometimes, indeed, he does begin to lift up his head in hope, conscious of a strength, which he has been able to exert for a season. He begins, perhaps, to reckon upon it as his own, and to suppose that he shall now at length escape from the bondage in which he has been held. Alas! the strength, on which he has relied, gives way in the time of temptation. He has no sweet assurance, as the Christian has, to comfort him under this disappointment, to raise and restore him, after his fall, to encourage him to repeat the effort, not in his own strength, but in the strength of Him who is our Head. And so it seems to him that he is still 'in the flesh,' and its weakness must yield, and Sin must be master, and lord it over him to the end. He feels that he cannot escape out of this thralldom,—that, struggle as he may, it is of no use to contend with evil,—that he must surrender himself to do the work of Sin, and receive its wages.

220. v. 15. *I do not allow*, literally, 'I do not know,' I do not recognise, approve of, allow; in the same sense in which it is said, 'The Lord knoweth them that are His.'

221. v. 16. *I agree to the Law that it is good*, I have an inward consciousness that the Law itself is good and excellent. It is the redeemed spirit, quickened with life from the Life which is in Christ, which is conscious of this, though the man himself may not know that he has such a living spirit within him, and may yield himself, in spite of this consciousness, to be the slave of Sin.

222. v. 17. *But now*. The word 'now' here does not refer to time, as if opposed to 'then,' but is equivalent to 'this being the case,' 'under these circumstances.'

223. v. 17. *No longer I work it out, but Sin dwelling in me*,—that is, in my fallen nature, as a man. The Apostle is still describing the state in which he found himself, when God's Law was brought home to his conscience, and he approved it heartily, his mind took delight in it, though he knew not why, he knew not that he was a spiritual creature, and that his spirit's life was, and would be, sustained by virtue of his union with the Spirit of Christ. And so he tried to keep the holy Law, and, presently, Sin sprung up into life in his fallen nature, beguiled him into disobedience, overthrew him, and slew him. And yet he did not consent willingly to be its slave. He speaks of himself,—not as doing from the heart the works of Sin, for in that case he *would* be 'working out' evil (ii. 9), but—as hating the work, while, from the weakness of the flesh, he does it, as loathing

the bondage, in which he feels himself, as it seems to him, hopelessly condemned to do the work of a slave. 'It is not I that work out this evil, that work it with my heart, with full consent and purpose. But it is the tyrant Sin, who lords it over me, and makes me do it, and is day by day in this manner destroying me, and bringing death upon me.'

224. v. 18. *There dwelleth not in me, that is, in my flesh, anything good; for to will is present to me, but to work out what is beautiful I find not.* 'In my flesh,' says the Apostle, 'in that nature which I derive from Adam, I know, there dwelleth no good thing.' He corrects the first expression, 'in me,' because he feels that in himself as a redeemed creature,—as having a second spiritual birth, a spiritual nature, derived from the second Adam,—there is something good. There *was* something good in him, though not in his fleshly nature, even under the circumstances he is describing, when he fell down, bowed, as it seemed, even unto death, under the accursed yoke of Sin. There *was* something good, for 'to *will* was present in him;' though, at that time, without any knowledge of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, from which his own spirit had derived its life, and might, at all times, draw fresh supplies of life for its daily necessities, he found not any means of 'working out' that which he saw to be so 'fair and good.' He was then working *for* life,—trying to 'work out' what is good, that he might establish his own righteousness, and enter into life. Now he has learned the blessedness of working *from* life, of receiving thankfully God's gracious gift of righteousness, bestowed upon him freely in His Son, and the gift of life which accompanies it. For in the power of that life, supplied daily from the Living Fountain, he can yield himself up to God, and his members as servants unto God,—not, indeed, perfectly, not so as to 'work out' that which is good, as he once thought of doing, seeking thereby gain or glory to himself, but so as to 'work' it, as a child of God, to the praise of his Father in Heaven.

225. v. 18. *Beautiful.* This is the nearest English word to express the Greek, which implies not merely what is good in itself, but what is seen to be lovely and fair, as well as good.

## CHAP. VII. 21—23.

(21) I find the law to me, willing to do what is beautiful, that evil is present to me. (22) For I delight in the Law of God in the inner man. (23) But I see another law in my members, warring against the

law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin, which is in my members.

## NOTES.

226. v. 21. *I find then the law, &c.* Is it then true that, whenever a man wishes to do good, evil is always present to him? Certainly, evil is always present in our nature on this side of the grave, and ready to tempt us, and draw us aside to evil; and, more or less, by reason of the weakness of our fleshly nature, it does mingle imperfection with all we do. When we do 'what we would,' Sin more or less defiles the action with its taint; and often, alas! it draws us on to do 'the things that we would not.' The pious heathen must have felt this, in some measure, as well as the pious Jew or Christian. He too has had to maintain the same kind of struggle with the evil in his nature, though he could not, perhaps, have expressed in words what he experienced, or explained, in such language as St. Paul has used in this chapter, the meaning of his troubled inner life. He, too, has felt that, when he would be doing good, evil was present to him.

Aliudque cupido,  
Mens aliud suadet. Video meliora, proboque;  
Deteriora sequor.

And if, in spite of this, the pious heathen has given his heart to do the good, and refused to do the evil, it was only because he had a strength supplied to him, from a source which he knew not. In his flesh, indeed, though he knew it not, there was no good thing; but in his Lord, unknown, perhaps, by Name to him as yet, but by whom he was known, there was Life, from which the life of his spirit came.

But to the true Christian these words of St. Paul are abundantly intelligible. He finds it to be 'the law'—that is, the rule under which his life in this world must be passed—that, when he would do good, evil will be present to him, suggested to him, or tempting him. The more devout and earnest and heavenly-minded a man has grown by God's grace, the more conscious he will be of this,—if not always, at every moment, yet so constantly, that he feels it to be, as it were, 'the law' of his earthly existence, he is ever reminded that sin is there, close at hand, in his fleshly nature. But this is the difference between his present state and his former state, when he too, perhaps—like St. Paul—lived for a season 'in the flesh,' unconscious of the spiritual influences, which, by God's grace, were even then acting upon him. *Then*, when at last he was stirred to the very depths within him by God's living word, coming home to his heart,—when he

thus became convinced of sin, of the perfect holiness of God's Blessed Law, and his own frequent unfaithfulness and utter inability to keep it,—he fell into hopelessness and despair, he fell back under the power of Sin and Death. *Now* he understands the whole. He knows that there *is* this Sin, 'which is in him,' that evil *will* be present to him, whenever he would be doing good,—that the hateful tyrant will try to bring him under its power as a mere fleshly creature, and may, perchance, through the weakness of the flesh, bound, as he still must be, in this life to this 'body of death,' make him still at times, against his will and better resolutions, do its vile work in some act or other. The knowledge he has of this fact will help to keep him humble and dependent, 'watching unto prayer;' but it will not *now* drive him to despair. For his spirit is still alive unto God, quickened with Christ's Life. He knows this, even when fallen for a season, and lying oppressed under the accursed slavery of Sin. He knows this, so long as he feels within him one single pulse, as it were, of spiritual life, one movement of the heart towards God and the remembrance of His Holiness, one thought of repentance, one desire to return, and throw himself at the feet of his Heavenly Father, and say, 'Father, I have sinned: I am no more worthy to be called thy child.' And, knowing that his spirit is thus still alive with Christ's Life, he knows also that he can have it quickened with the abundance of that Life. He is able now to shake off the hold of Sin. He confesses his fault to that gracious Father, who has known it all along, and receives again that 'righteousness,' that 'forgiveness' of his 'unrighteousness,' that 'covering' of his 'sin,' which that Father's Love has freely provided for him in His own dear Son. And then, with the sense of that renewal of the gift of righteousness, there comes a flow of fresh life into his whole spiritual being. Being justified by faith, by simple trust in God's Fatherly forgiving Mercy and restoring Love, he has peace again with God. He is able now to look up again to Heaven, with tearful eyes, indeed, and with a broken heart, but yet with joy beaming through his tears, and a living hope possessing his bosom. And so he springs forward again to his work by his Master's side, singing cheerfully the song of faith, and saying, 'Sin shall not lord it over me; for I am not under the Law, but under Grace.'

227. v. 22. *I delight in the Law of God in the inner man.* In my heart of hearts I heartily approve and love the blessed Law of God, even when the sin in my fleshly nature tempts me to disobedience, and my weak and foolish will consents to be beguiled. By the 'inner man' the Apostle means not the spirit, or the will, but the thinking, reasoning, part of man, the 'mind,' as he afterwards calls it, endowed with reason and conscience, the faculties of moral sense, which are quickened into action, because he



is a redeemed creature, and has a living spirit within him. (See note 228.) He is speaking here, in his own person, of men, like himself, to whose hearts the word of God has come home, and who long to be conformed unto the Holy Will of God, but fall back in despair, at the sense of its perfection and of their own vileness. But the statement, which he has here made, expresses also the experience of every human being. As redeemed creatures, we do, every one of us,—the ignorant heathen, as well as the enlightened Christian,—‘delight in the Law of God in our inner man,’ so far as it has been revealed and brought home to us, whether we obey it or not.

228. v. 22. *But I see another law in my members.* The Apostle speaks of the human body and its natural desires, as in themselves indifferent, just as in the case of other creatures. The body and its members are innocent of all sin, as being mere matter, having no consciousness of good or evil. But the body and its members must be managed, and used as instruments for good or evil. And the question is, what power shall rule them,—the power of the spirit, quickened by the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, or the power of Sin, which is in us, in our fleshly nature, and tries to lord it over the body, and lay down its law upon the members. By nature, by our mere natural descent from Adam, the ‘law of sin is in our members.’ And, if a man is still living ‘in the flesh,’ knowing nothing as yet of the Spirit of Life, of which the Gospel speaks to us, then, when the word of God comes home to him first with its mighty power, it will seem to him that he must yield up his body to do the work of Sin, and must himself become its slave. It is true, that he is not really, as he supposes, a mere fleshly being. He feels even now a ‘law of his mind,’ against which this ‘law of sin in his members is warring.’ That ‘law of his mind’ is a sign, if he only knew its meaning, that he is not merely a fleshly and fallen, but a redeemed and spiritual, creature. The ‘mind’—the thinking, reasoning, part of man—stands here, in fact, for the man himself, considered as a thinking and reasoning being, as having reason and conscience, having power to discern the right from the wrong, the good from the evil, because he has a living spirit given him, in union with which these faculties of moral sense are quickened. If he had no living spirit given him, by union through God’s grace with the Living Head of the great human family,—if he were only a fallen, fleshly, and sinful, and therefore also an accursed, creature, instead of a redeemed one,—these faculties of moral sense would be dead; he would have no power to behold the beauty of goodness and the deformity of vice, to approve the one and condemn the other. But every man is redeemed and has a living spirit given him, by virtue of his union with his Lord. And, though he may, by long continuance in known

evil, crush out by degrees more and more the very life of his spirit, yet so long as he has still within him, however faint, that spiritual life, his reason and conscience will lay down a law to him, as a thinking being, the 'law of his mind.' Thus it is that, in the 'inner man,' he approves of the Law of God, as holy, just, and good, even while he weakly yields to the 'law of sin which is in his members,' which 'wars against the law of his mind,' and is 'led captive' by it at its will.

Among the Zulus there is a distinct recognition of the double nature of man. They speak of the *uGovana*, which prompts him to steal and lie, commit murder and adultery, and the *uNembeza*, which 'bids him,' as a native would say, 'leave all that.'

229. v. 23. *leading me captive.* The Greek Present here used may imply not actually 'leading captive,' (which may or may not be the case,) but 'seeking to lead captive.' 'The law of sin in my members fights against the law of my mind, and is bent upon bringing me under subjection to itself (the law of sin in my members), as a captive slave.'

## CHAP. VII. 24, 25.

(24) Wretched man that I am ! Who shall deliver me out of this body of death ? I thank God through Christ Jesus our Lord. (25) So then I myself with my mind serve, as a slave, the Law of God, though with the flesh the law of sin.

### NOTES.

230. v. 24. *Wretched man that I am !* The groan is at last forced out from a man, who, still living 'in the flesh,' unconscious of his hope and strength as a redeemed creature, knowing nothing of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, by which his own spirit lives, is strong in his own strength to do what is good, or seems to be so, (for the strength, which he has, comes really from God, though he does not yet know this, but thinks it his own,) and finds himself again and again overcome,—finds himself beguiled by the sin in his nature, and led captive to the law of sin in his members, in spite of the voice of reason and conscience, in opposition to the law of his mind,—and so, at last, sinks back in despair.

231. v. 24. *Who shall deliver me out of this body of death ?* Then, at last, he cries for help. He cannot save himself from being overcome by the power of evil. But is there none Mighty to save—and Merciful as well

as Mighty—able and willing to deliver him 'out of this body of death'—not 'from,' but 'out of,' as if he were helplessly sunk and held fast in it? He calls our present body a 'body of death,' because it is a 'body of Sin,'—innocent and helpless, indeed, in itself, indifferent to good or evil, but, as far as our natural birth is concerned, used by our fleshly nature, as the instrument of Sin, to work out death in us.

232. v. 24. *I thank God through Christ Jesus our Lord.* I thank God I am delivered out of it,—not from it, (for that can only be when it is broken up by death,) but out of it, out of the state of helplessness in which I seemed sunk, because tied to this body. For the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus enables me to strive with and overcome the law of sin and death, which is in my members; and I can now refuse to be the slave of Sin, and to yield up my members to its will.

233. v. 25. *So then I myself, &c.* Now, therefore, since we have received the grace of God in Christ Jesus, I, the true man, myself, (with reference to vv. 17, 20, where he had said it is not *I* that do this evil, but Sin that dwelleth in me,) can serve and do serve with my mind, my thinking, reasoning powers, the Law of God, although, it is true, my fleshly nature still is a slave to the law of Sin. If I did not know God's grace in the Gospel, I might, indeed, be miserable, be overwhelmed with shame and dread, at finding by daily experience, that, while with my mind I obey God's Law, yet still there is a part of my nature, which is corrupt and evil, and holds me back from obeying it as perfectly as I would,—a fallen, fleshly nature, in which Sin dwells. But I will not let the Sin in my fleshly nature work out its work in me, as it seeks to do. It is not lord over me, though it claims to be so. My fleshly nature may and will own its rule, as indeed it must; but I myself will not; with my mind I will serve the law of God, walking 'not after the flesh, but after the spirit.'

## CHAP. VIII. 1—4.

(1) So then there is now no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus. (2) For the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus freed me from the Law of Sin and Death. (3) For, what to the Law was impossible, that wherein it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, con-

demned the sin in the flesh ; (4) that so the requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us, walking, of course, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

## NOTES.

234. v. 1. *so then there is now no condemnation to those in Christ Jesus.* The Apostle is speaking of earnest, devout believers, like himself, who have realised the true meaning of the blessed gift of righteousness which the Gospel declares to us. Now from his heart, as he says in the next verse, and from the heart of others like him, to whom the words of life have been brought home, the weight has been taken off, the sense of guilt and misery and condemnation, which would otherwise have driven them to despair, and left them helpless under the power of Sin and Death.

From all, then, which has been said, it follows, and this is the blessed Message of the Gospel, that, though we have a sinful nature, and are conscious of innumerable faults and shortcomings, there is no condemnation against us for that. We are 'in Christ Jesus,'—objects of favour in Him, regarded by our Heavenly Father, as redeemed and reconciled in Him. The words, 'who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit,' which stand at the end of this verse in the English Version, are not found in the best MSS., and were probably introduced from verse 4 by some transcriber, who thought it necessary to correct in this way what seemed to him too bold an assertion.

If men, Christians or others, do walk 'after the flesh,' of course, there will be condemnation upon them, as he has said already in ii. 6—16. But he is not referring here to *that* kind of condemnation, which will justly rest on those who 'keep back the truth in unrighteousness,' and wilfully sin against the light, and knowledge of the right and true vouchsafed to them.

235. v. 2. *the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus freed me from the law of Sin and Death.* As soon as the words of life in the Gospel came home to my heart, the chains of Sin and Death fell off from my hands. I found that I was no longer obliged to be the slave of Sin, and obey its law. I found that I was under a law of Life and Love,—that the Spirit of Grace was given me, to quicken my spirit, and restore it constantly, when faint and feeble. And that Spirit was given as a Spirit of Adoption also, and its operations within my heart, of which I am daily conscious, are signs to me that I am dealt with as a child, that my Father loves me, that I am not an accursed, but a redeemed creature. Under that law of Love my heart, my will, yielded itself joyfully, choosing to obey the

better Law of my mind, and not the law of sin, which is in my fleshly nature, and tries to bring me under its power.

This 'Law of the Spirit of Life' is, doubtless, brought home, more or less distinctly, to many, who have not been blessed with the full revelation of it in the Gospel, and with proportionate effect in filling their hearts with strength and peace in the discharge of life's duties. If any heathen, such as Socrates or Cicero, has felt a cheerful, child-like confidence in the Divine Goodness and Mercy, while following, though imperfectly, yet sincerely and with a single eye, the Law of his mind, as a redeemed creature,—that which he knew to be the good and the true,—that joy must have been the fruit of the same Good Spirit in his heart, inspiring his spirit with life, 'working in him both to will and to do, after God's good pleasure.'

236. v. 3. *for, what to the law was impossible, &c.* For 'what the Law,' God's blessed Law, brought home to the heart and conscience in any way, 'could not do,'—the thing, 'in which it was weak by reason of the flesh,' because Sin is in our fleshly nature, and rules it as its slave,—'God did,' who 'sent His own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh and on account of sin, and thereby condemned the sin in our flesh.'

The pure and perfect Law seemed to bring under condemnation human nature itself, as if it were impossible for any human being, for one with such flesh as ours, with such natural desires, passions, and affections, to be perfectly pure and holy. Our Lord took our flesh: He was made in our likeness, in the likeness of this very flesh of ours, this flesh of ours which has the taint of sin,—'in the likeness of sinful flesh,' with a nature like ours, yet so that His fleshly nature had no taint of sin. He was made like unto us in all points, a true, living, man of flesh and blood, with body, soul, and spirit, such as we have,—subject to all the weakness and infirmity of this sinful flesh, subject to suffering and pain, disease and death, taking the very likeness of this sinful flesh, only without the taint of sin. And He, in that flesh, which He took,—He, as a Man, a true Man, a true Brother of the race, He,—'bearing all our griefs, carrying all our sorrows,' sharing in all the weakness and pains of our flesh, suffering from hunger and thirst, cold and weariness, trial and temptation, having passions and affections, like other men,—yet wrought, *in that very flesh*, a perfect righteousness, and so showed that sin was not a necessary ingredient of a fleshly nature like ours, that it was possible to be clothed with flesh, as we are, to have a fleshly nature as we have, yet not a sinful one, to be a human being, such as we are, and not sin. This is one way in which God condemned the sin in our flesh, by sending His Son in the likeness of that very flesh, to fulfil the blessed Law of God.

But He sent Him also 'on account of sin,' as a 'sacrifice for sin,'—not

merely as an evidence and example of what *might* be done by a human being, clothed with flesh and blood, as we are, if we had the strength of righteous creatures, as He had, but to take away our unrighteousness, by offering up Himself, in His Life and Death of perfect obedience, a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, and well-pleasing unto God. God sent Him thus, in order that He Himself, our Loving Father, might put away our sin, and receive and bless us as righteous creatures in Him. Thus 'our unrighteousness is forgiven,' and 'our sin covered,' by the Love of our Heavenly Father, looking at Him and His perfect offering of righteousness, and at us in Him, our union with Him being evidenced by His taking a Body in the likeness of our sinful flesh, and being sealed by His Blood. Not only ourselves, but the living sacrifices, which we offer, though in themselves imperfect and unclean, are sprinkled with His Blood, in the eyes of our Heavenly Father. They are looked upon as one with that perfect Sacrifice which He offered, by virtue of that Death, which completed His human life of obedience, and fully declared His brotherhood with us; and so they too are 'holy and acceptable unto God, our reasonable service.'

In this way, also, by sending His Son to make at-one-ment for sin, to take away our sin in God's sight, by the perfect sacrifice, which He offered, of loving obedience, even unto death, a death which sealed His union with us as our Head, God further and more fully condemned 'the sin in our flesh.' He showed before that sin was no necessary part of a fleshly nature, that such a being as man, even in his present weak and suffering state, if not a fallen creature, has nothing to do with serving sin, and need not be its slave. He now showed further that even, though fallen, we are not left to be its slaves; for God Himself has restored and raised us from the Fall; He has sent His Son as a sacrifice on account of sin, and, looking at Him and His pure offering, He looks with favour upon us, though sinful creatures; He freely puts away our sin for the sake of Him, whom He Himself has sent to be our Head. Our sins fade away and disappear in the light of His perfect righteousness, and we receive the free gift of righteousness and life. In both these ways God 'condemned the sin in our flesh.' He made it plain that, though present in our fleshly nature, it was no proper part of it, it ought not to be there; and, though it will be there to the end of this mortal life, when 'this body of death' shall be done away, yet it *need* not, and *must* not, rule the man, as a redeemed creature, a member of Christ, a child of God, whom the 'law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has set free from the law of Sin and Death.'

The Law by itself could not do this. It could only convince a man of sin—make him feel that he had a sinful taint in his nature, that sin was in his flesh. It could not 'condemn the sin in his flesh.' It could not make

the man feel, either that sin *ought* not to have such power in a fleshly nature like ours, or that it *need* not, and *must* not, by bringing our members to do its work, as instruments of unrighteousness, be allowed to put forth this power in us, though we are fallen creatures, and our fleshly nature has the taint of sin. Only the Gospel of God's Free Grace and Love in Christ Jesus could do this.

237. v. 4. *fulfilled*, not perfectly, but with hearty readiness and full desire, embracing the whole Law in all its points.

238. v. 4. *walking, of course, &c.* The words, 'of course,' express the force of the Greek article here. St. Paul qualifies, as it were, his language, knowing that, notwithstanding all the grace of God, the requirements of His blessed Law will not be fulfilled by all, but only by those who walk after the Spirit.

239. v. 4. *after the flesh.* Note, that to 'walk *in the flesh*,' is not the same as to 'walk after the flesh.' The difference in the two expressions is well shown in 2 Cor. x. 2, 3. 'Some think of us as if we walked *after the flesh*. But, though we walk *in the flesh*, we do not war *after the flesh*.' To 'walk in the flesh' is to walk as persons still bearing about with us the consequences of the Fall, whether with or without a consciousness of our condition, whether with or without a willing surrender of the heart to abide in that condition. To live 'after the flesh' is to make this surrender, to follow the suggestions and impulses of our fallen fleshly nature, which is a 'slave of Sin.'

240. v. 4. *after the spirit.* The spirit, here, is the spirit of the man, which is quickened by the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, and, so long as it lives, is the 'servant of God,' which the whole man, with his mind, is bound to obey.

## CHAP. VIII. 5—11.

(5) For those after the flesh mind the *things* of the flesh; but those after the spirit, the *things* of the spirit. (6) For the mind of the flesh is death; but the mind of the spirit is life and peace. (7) Because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not for being subjected to the law of God, neither, indeed, can be; (8) but they, who are in flesh, cannot please God. (9) But ye are not in flesh, but in spirit,

if, indeed, the Spirit of God dwells in you. But, if any *man* has not the Spirit of Christ, that *man* is not His. (10) But, if Christ be in you, the body, indeed, is dead, by reason of sin, but the spirit is life by reason of righteousness. (11) But, if the Spirit of Him, who raised Jesus from the dead, dwells in you, He, who raised Christ from the dead, shall quicken also your mortal bodies by reason of His Spirit which dwelleth in you.

## NOTES.

241. v. 6. *the mind of the flesh is death, &c.* That which the flesh, the fallen, fleshly, Adam-nature, minds or concerns itself about, is sin, which is another name for death. But that which the spirit of a man minds, quickened by the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, is goodness, which is another name for life and peace.

According to St. Paul, the flesh, the old, fallen, fleshly nature, derived from our birth from the first Adam, is always setting its heart on what is evil; while the spirit, the new spiritual nature, derived from our birth from the second Adam, is always setting its heart on what is good. And now, which will the man himself, in the awful responsibility of his own will, choose to obey? Will he yield himself up to Sin, as a willing slave, surrendering his helpless body and its members, as instruments of unrighteousness, to the Sin which dwells in his fallen, fleshly nature, and so by degrees destroy the life of his spirit? Or will he yield himself up to God, and so find his own spirit more and more abound with life, and his heart with peace, being filled with all the fulness of God?

242. v. 8. *they, who are in flesh*, in a fleshly state, living as mere fleshly creatures, knowing no other mind than that of the flesh, yielding themselves up to the sin in their flesh, to do its work as slaves, sunk down, as it were, into the midst of their fleshly nature, and making no efforts to rise out of it. Such 'cannot please God:' He cannot take delight in them: they cannot offer Him the living sacrifice of all their powers, which He desires of His children. How far such a state is *guilty* before God, He only can tell, who knows the secrets of all hearts and lives, what light and knowledge have been granted and abused.

243. v. 9. *in spirit*, in a spiritual state, living as spiritual creatures, giving yourselves up to be moulded for all that is good, by the influences of the spirit within you, which is quickened and led by the Spirit of God.



244. v. 9. *but you are not in flesh, but in spirit, if, indeed, the Spirit of God dwells in you.* 'But you, at all events, are not in a fleshly, but a spiritual, state, if, indeed, you are conscious, (as, of course, you are,) that the Spirit of God has quickened your spirits with life, and dwells with life-giving, life-sustaining power within you.'

245. v. 9. *the Spirit of Christ.* In this passage the three expressions are used as synonymous, 'Spirit of God,' 'Spirit of Christ,' 'Christ.' But it would not be right to force this fact into a proof of the doctrine of the Trinity, which is not necessarily involved in it. Indeed, it is most probable that St. Paul uses the words 'of Christ,' in the sense of 'belonging to Christ,' He being, as it were, the *proprietor* of the Spirit of God, having been entrusted with the gift of Life, as the Head, to bestow it upon the members. Thus (Acts i. 4) our Lord Himself speaks of the Spirit, as 'the promise of the Father,' and (Acts ii. 32, 33) St. Peter says, 'This Jesus, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, hath shed forth this which ye now both see and hear.' It is the 'Spirit of Life' which God gives us in His Son.

246. v. 9. *If any man has not the Spirit of Christ, that man is not His.* The Apostle states this as an axiom, self-evident. 'Of course, every living member of the Body must partake of the life of the Head. So that, if any man has no sign whatever of a living spirit within him, drawing its life from the Spirit of Life, which is given to us in Christ Jesus, that man cannot belong to Christ.' The words are not intended to imply that some men have the Spirit of Christ, and some not, (whether this be so or not,) any more than the words addressed to Nicodemus, 'Unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,' implied that some men were thus born again, and others not, or that he needed at some future time to be born again, and was not so born already. Those words of our Lord laid down the general truth that a new spiritual birth was needed, besides the natural one, that a man may enter heaven. And the words now before us enunciate in another form the same truth. 'If any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.' If, therefore, a man can be found, so utterly depraved, as to have no spark of spiritual life remaining in him, not a single good thought, no desire to do what is right, because it is right, no movement of godly sorrow for things done wrong, no wish for amendment, nothing but sullen hatred of all goodness, hatred of God, and hatred of his fellow-men—of such a man, if such can be found, we might fear that it may be true that he has quenched the spirit, the living fire, that was once kindled by God's grace, within his heart, he has crushed out and killed the spiritual life, that was given him in his second spiritual birth, as a redeemed creature; as he shows no sign of having, in any measure, the Spirit of Christ,

it may be that he has none of it, and if so, he cannot be His. Yet, let every man judge himself: we cannot dare to judge our brother-man in this way. And, blessed be God, the converse is also true. If any man *have* the Spirit of Christ in any measure, and however he may have trifled with the heavenly gift, and resisted the grace of God, 'that was for leading him to repentance,' still feels within him one movement of spiritual life, by that sign he may know that he is still one of Christ's, still regarded as in Him, still able to draw from the Fount of Life, which is opened in Him, all the plentiful supply which he needs for his fainting spirit.

247. v. 10. *the body, indeed, is dead, by reason of sin; but the spirit is life, by reason of righteousness.* St. Paul, in this, and other passages, which shall be noted as we reach them, speaks of the spirit being even now alive with life flowing from the Spirit of Christ; whereas the body, he says, is still dead, it has not received life, so as to be a fit servant of the living spirit, a spiritual body. The resurrection of the spirit has already taken place; the resurrection of the body is yet to come. The spirit is life, because of the righteousness which God has given us in His Son. By our natural birth only, it lay under the power of Sin and the necessity of Death, as well as the body; but already a new life has been given to it; it is redeemed and quickened by union with Christ's Spirit. The body, however, is not yet redeemed; it is dead, because of the sin in our fleshly nature, in that nature which we derive from Adam, and to which our bodies belong. It is still under the necessity of dying, before it can be redeemed altogether from the power of that 'sin in the flesh,' which uses too often, and tries continually to use, the natural bodily desires and its members, as servants of unrighteousness, to do its will, against the better law of the mind and spirit. But the grace of God in Christ Jesus will make the grave a gate of life even for our mortal bodies, as the Apostle goes on to explain in the next verse.

248. v. 11. *If the Spirit of Him, who raised Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, &c.* If it be, indeed, true, as you know it is, that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you,—the Spirit by whom He Himself, our Head, was raised from the dead, never more to die, His mortal body being changed to a glorified, spiritual body,—this fact itself is a pledge that you also will in like manner be raised, by the power of the self-same Spirit, and this mortal body of yours shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption; when the body also shall be redeemed from the power of evil, and this sinful, fleshly nature be wholly done away, and the glorified body be a willing servant of the spirit in the work of righteousness.

## CHAP. VIII. 12—17.

(12) So, then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh ; (13) for, if ye will live after the flesh, ye will die ; but, if by the spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live. (14) For all, who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. (15) For ye received not a Spirit of slavery again unto fear ; but ye received a Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, 'Abba ! Father !' (16) The Spirit itself witnesseth with our spirit that we are children of God. (17) But, if children, then also heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ ; if, at least, we suffer together with *Him*, that so we may be glorified together with *Him*.

## NOTES.

249. v. 12. *So then, &c.* At last, we get the full answer to the question in vi. 1, 'Shall we continue in sin that so grace may abound ?' repeated in vi. 15, 'Shall we sin, because we are not under law, but under grace ?' The Apostle has intended to give this answer all along, but has been interrupted by two or three digressions, into which his train of thought led him, *more suo*, while dictating this letter to his amanuensis, Tertius—very probably on different occasions, for we cannot suppose so long and thoughtful a letter was written in one day.

250. v. 13. *ye will die*, not *ye shall die*, as in the English version, but 'ye are about to die.' The Apostle is here speaking of death, as the natural necessary consequence of men's living after the flesh, not of any judgment which God will pass upon them. In the latter part of the verse, the Greek construction is changed, and the English version is correct, 'ye shall live.'

251. v. 13. *if by the spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body*, that is, the deeds of excess, into which, under the influence of the 'sin in the flesh,' the helpless body and its members would be carried, if unrestrained by the spirit, which has the power given it, to put those unruled desires to death, and should do so in the very first promptings of them.

252. v. 14. *for all, who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.* The point in the Apostle's meaning in these words will be lost entirely, if we do not notice where the stress lies. St. Paul does not say, 'All, who are being led by God's Spirit, *they*, and none other, are the sons of God.' But he throws the stress (as the Greek shows) on the word Spirit, and says, 'All, who are being led by the *Spirit* of God, they are no other than *sons* of God.' And the whole of the rest of the chapter is employed in showing what glorious consequences follow from this.

Let us well mark the Apostle's argument; it is the ground of unspeakable hope and comfort to us. The very fact, he says, that we are being led by the Spirit of God, is a proof that we are dealt with as sons, that we may look up, and call the Great God, our Father. He, who has dealt so graciously with us, as to give us His Spirit to guide and teach us, means us to understand, by that one fact, His Fatherly Love to us. It is the sure sign that He loves us; and, blessed be His Name, it is an *abiding* sign. So long as He takes not from any man the light and life of His Holy Spirit, that man may have hope; for he is still dealt with as a child, and not as a foe. But, if we know that we are being led by that Gracious Spirit, day by day, in the way of righteousness—that, as true, obedient children, we desire to follow the guidance of that Heavenly Friend, whose still small voice we hear continually in our hearts,—then we may, indeed, take all the joy, which this proof of our Father's Love is meant to give us; we may be sure of this, that, fallen and sinful as we are, yet are we regarded, in very deed and truth, as 'sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.'

253. v. 15. *For ye received not, &c.* 'I say, *sons* of God; for the Spirit, which you were given, under the Gospel, in Christ Jesus, was not a Spirit of slavery again, to beget fear in you—a Spirit of slavish fear of a holy God—like that which the Law by itself, (unrelieved by the promises of Gospel Mercy and Forgiveness, which abound in the Old Testament, as well as in the New,) can alone bring with it for a fallen man. But it was a Spirit of adoption, whereby we are enabled to look up with cheerful confidence, and cry to Him, Abba, Father.'

254. v. 16. *The Spirit itself witnesseth with our spirit that we are children of God.* The Spirit itself, which has quickened our spirit, bears witness with it, that we are, indeed, God's children. Our spirit witnesses this, because, redeemed and quickened by the Spirit of Life, we know that it delights in our Father's Will, and groans over every word and act which is opposed to it. We are grieved with anything which grieves Him; and so we are assured that we have something at least of the true spirit of children. God's Spirit witnesseth this by the very fact of its being with us, inspiring and helping us. The first, the spirit of a man, witnesses *subjec-*

*tively*; each one for himself can feel the force of the witness. The second, the Spirit of God, by its very presence with the children of men, witnesses *objectively*. All men can see the meaning of this great fact. Whether a man hears or forbears to hear, follows or refuses to follow, the voice of his Gracious Teacher, yet the mere fact, that the Spirit of God is still vouchsafed to him, imparting to him light and life in any measure, is a proof that he is treated, not as an enemy, but as a child of God.

Of course, the Apostle here, as throughout the Epistle, is speaking more expressly of the devout and faithful Christian, to whom his words, here and elsewhere, apply in all their fulness. The inward longings of our hearts, whereby we yearn for God, yea, even the Living God,—which seem to witness of our divine relationship, though we, poor creatures of the dust, can scarcely dare to believe the evidence,—these hidden desires and aspirations do yet become for us a strong ground of living hope and trust, when we consider by whom they have been quickened, by whose power such thoughts have been awakened in us—how God Himself is here ‘guiding us by His Counsel, that He may bring us to His Glory,’—imparting Himself to us in some measure upon earth, that we may see His Perfect Beauty hereafter,—giving us a foretaste of that blessedness, into which our Head has already entered, and which shall be the rich ‘inheritance of the Saints in Light.’ But the Apostle’s words are in a measure true of all men, in whom the spiritual life, which they have received as redeemed creatures, still exists, in whatever degree, not having been altogether crushed out and killed, by indulgence in known evil.

255. v. 17. *joint-heirs with Christ*. ‘Whatever glory shall be shared by our Head, that we shall share also.’ The words have an awful meaning in them. They tell us of a joy unutterable, an ‘exceeding and eternal weight of glory,’ which ‘eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart of man conceived, but which God has prepared’ for us, in the counsels of His Almighty Love and Wisdom in Christ Jesus.

256. v. 17. *if, at least, we also suffer together with Him*. The Apostle puts in the necessary correction to the generality of his language,—one which our own hearts can supply also. If we would reign with Christ, we must be willing also to suffer with him, to be tried and proved and perfected, as He was, through suffering, as our Father shall appoint for us. We too, must ‘learn obedience,’ as He did, and grow in the true spirit of children, by what we suffer. In some way or other, we must expect to have our portion of suffering, our share of the cross in our passage to the crown. Whether in the faithful discharge of daily duty, or the endurance of daily affliction, the struggle with some besetting sin, or the effort to grow in

some Christian virtue, in whatever way such 'suffering' is appointed for us, it does but witness of our fellowship with Him, who for our sakes suffered as the Son of Man, that we might be made the children of God.

### CHAP. VIII. 18—23.

(18) For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy [to be named] with reference to the glory which will be revealed upon us. (19) For the earnest longing of the creature is expecting the revelation of the sons of God. (20) For the creature was subjected to wretchedness, not of its own accord, but by reason of Him who subjected it in hope, (21) that the creature also itself shall be set free from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. (22) For we know that all the creature groaneth together and travaileth in birthpang together until now. (23) And not only so, but even we ourselves, having the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves, sigh in ourselves, awaiting adoption, the redemption of our body.

#### NOTES.

257. v. 18. *for I reckon, &c.* The connexion is obvious. Toil and trial we must have in this world; we must in our measure suffer with our Lord. But what of that? We shall also be glorified with Him; and that should be enough to keep us steadfast and unmoveable in all our trials. 'For I reckon that all the sufferings of this life vanish into nothing, in comparison with the Glory which will be revealed upon us.' That Glory the Apostle never attempts to describe; he only glances at it in such passages as these, 'Eye hath not seen,' &c.; and so St. John says, 'We know not what we shall be.' To be like our Head, and with Him to dwell in our Father's Presence, and hear His Voice, and behold His Face, and go no more out for ever—such is the wondrous hope of the Christian,—such is the glory which 'shall be revealed upon us,' at that 'revelation of the sons of God,' which the whole human race is expecting with earnest longings.

258. v. 19. *the earnest longing of the creature is expecting the revelation of the sons of God.* The Greek word here translated 'creature,' is the same which occurs in Mark xvi. 15, 'Preach the Gospel to *all the creature*,' and Col. i. 23, 'The Gospel, which was preached to *all the creature* under heaven.' From these passages it appears plain that the expression is used for 'mankind,' the 'whole human race,' 'humanity,' with especial reference to the great mass of it, lying still in an unenlightened and degraded state, but not excluding the few to whom the message of life had already come. And in this sense the Apostle employs it here. (So Augustine, Lightfoot, Locke, Turretin, Macknight, &c.) Hence, in verse 23, he selects out of 'the creature,' generally, and distinguishes, 'us, who have received the firstfruits of the Spirit,' that is, Christians.

Thus, then, St. Paul here says: 'The earnest longing of humanity is waiting for that day, when the sons of God,—the true-hearted and faithful of every age and clime,—those, who, with the light they had, whether with the starlight of nature only, or with the brighter light, as of a clouded noon, vouchsafed to the Jew, or under the full clear shining of the Sun of Righteousness, have, imperfectly, indeed, at the best, in every case, because of the weakness of the flesh, yet with sincerity and singleness of heart and purpose, each according to his gift, 'persevered in well-doing,'—when these 'shall be revealed,' shall be disclosed to the eyes of all, shall be crowned with 'glory, honour, and immortality,' and be called to 'enter into the joy of their Lord.' The whole of humanity is looking for this day, when every life of faithfulness on earth shall receive its reward, a reward not of debt, but of grace,—when wickedness shall cease to triumph, and lives of unrepented sin and wilful disobedience, of fraud, injustice, oppression, cruelty, impurity, shall have their just meed of retribution. St. Paul seems to hear the sighing of the human race for deliverance from the power of Sin and Death, the 'bondage of corruption,' under which they groan at present, not being as yet aware of the redemption, which has really been wrought for them, and shall in due time be made known to them.

259. v. 20. *for the creature was subjected to wretchedness, not of its own accord, but by reason of Him who subjected it in hope.* The Greek word, here translated 'wretchedness,' admirably expresses the frailty and feebleness of our present mortal state, subject to pain and weakness, sorrow, suffering, and death,—that state, which our Lord took part in, and thereby became subject to suffering,—that state, in which we too must suffer with Him. Hence the connection with the words preceding. 'I say, the whole of humanity is looking for that hour; for now it is in a state of feebleness, beset with evil of every kind, physical and spiritual.'

260. v. 20. *not of its own accord.* To this state of feebleness the

human race was subjected, not of its own accord, of its own free choice, by any voluntary act of evil, like that of Adam's, but wholly without any blame attaching to men, for that state of vanity in which they find themselves. The Apostle utterly repudiates the notion, that any stain of *moral guilt* can attach to an innocent infant, for the corrupt taint in its nature, derived from its earthly parents. Nevertheless, the corruption, the seed of death, is there in its nature. It has been made subject to the 'ills that mortal flesh is heir to,' not by any act of its own, but by the will of God, its faithful Creator, its loving Friend and Father, who was pleased to 'subject it' to all this vanity 'in hope.' When He willed that the human race should be propagated from its first parents, He willed, indeed, that it should be subject to frailty and to painful trial. But He willed also, in His Faithfulness and Love He willed, that it should be freed from 'any curse, for the sinful nature which it bore, and that it should have part in a blessed hope. He willed that His own dear Son should be its Head, and overcome Sin and Death on its behalf, and restore to the whole race infinitely more than ever Adam's sin had lost. The 'vanity,' to which we are now subject, we suffer as the *consequence* of sin, the sin which we inherit in our own nature, by our birth from the first Adam; but we do not suffer it as the *chastisement* of sin. All idea of chastisement, or curse, being laid upon us for Adam's sin, or the 'sin in our nature,' which we derive from him, through no fault of our own, is done away for every member of the race, by the fact that we have now another Head, the second Adam, in whom the Lord our God has loved and redeemed us. Hence, says the Apostle, we are subject to vanity, not willingly, by any act of our own, but by reason of Him, our Heavenly Father, who has been pleased so to subject us, but to subject us 'in hope.'

261. v. 21. *that the creature also itself shall be set free from the bondage of corruption, into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.*

I cannot shut my eyes to the truth, which these words appear so clearly to imply, that there is hope in the counsels of Infinite Wisdom and Love, for *all*, for all 'the creature,' for the whole human race, that fell in Adam, and has been graciously redeemed in Christ. The 'children of God,' the faithful and true of all ages, all lands, all religions, will be 'revealed,' will receive their 'glorious freedom' in the Kingdom of their Lord. While others, perhaps the great mass of human kind, who have been wilfully unfaithful, in greater or less degree, to the light vouchsafed to them, and are still willingly held in the bondage of corruption, though they might have asserted their freedom from it, and lived as good men and true, with the grace vouchsafed to them, will receive their righteous judgment unto condemnation,—'indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every



soul of man that worketh out evil.' But this chastisement, after all, comes from a Father's Hand, upon those who may be wilful, prodigal, unruly, disobedient, but yet are creatures, whom He Himself has redeemed, for whom Christ died. Can we say, with these words of St. Paul before us, that such chastisement, however severe, may *not* be remedial, may not be intended to work out the 'hope,' under which the whole race has been 'subjected to vanity,' which 'hope,' in the Apostle's mind, is the justification of the Eternal Justice and Love in so subjecting it, when it had not deserved such a fate, nor brought it about 'of its own accord,' by any act of its own? Is there not ground, from this text, as well as others, for trusting that, in some way unknown to us, the whole race shall, indeed, be made to share this hope at last, and so be 'set free from the bondage of corruption, into the freedom of the glory of the children of God'?

I feel it necessary to say more on this subject. There was a time, when I thought and wrote otherwise. Some years ago, in the year 1853, I published a small volume of 'Village Sermons,' which I dedicated to a dear and honoured friend, the Rev. F. D. Maurice, and which was violently attacked, in consequence of this dedication, by those who had previously assailed Mr. Maurice's teaching, as containing what seemed to them erroneous statements of doctrine, and, particularly, as expressing agreement with Mr. Maurice's views on the subject of 'Eternal Punishment.' I was able to show, by quotations from my little book itself, that these charges were untrue, and that I had given offence, partly by stating larger views of the Redeeming Love of God in Christ Jesus, than the Reviewer of my Sermons himself thought it right to hold, (though views held by such men as Barrow and Macknight,) but chiefly by expressing my cordial sympathy with Mr. Maurice, in his noble and blessed labours. In particular, I was able then to show that, in several places in those very Sermons, I had distinctly spoken of Eternal Punishment, in terms directly at variance with those which my friend would have used, and in exact conformity with the views of my Reviewer. Accordingly, in the Preface to the second edition of his 'Theological Essays,' Mr. Maurice spoke of me as 'having proved by my Sermons that I believed in the endlessness of future punishments.' I did believe in that dogma, at the time I wrote and printed those Sermons, so far as that can be called belief, which, in fact, was no more than acquiescence, in common, I imagine, with very many of my brother clergy, in the ordinary statements on the subject, without having ever deeply studied the question, probably with a shrinking dread of examining it, and without having ever ventured formally to write or preach a Sermon upon the subject, and pursue it, in thought and word, to all its consequences. There are many, who, as I did myself in those days, would assert the dogma as a

part of their 'Creed,' and now and then, in a single sentence of a Sermon, utter a few words in accordance with it, but who have never set themselves down to face the question, and deliver their own souls upon it to their flocks, fully and unreservedly. For my own part, I admit, I acquiesced in it, seeing *some* reasons for assuming it to be true, knowing that the mass of my clerical brethren assented to it with myself, and contenting myself with making some reference to it, now and then, in my ministrations, without caring to dwell deliberately upon it, and considering what might be urged against it.

The controversy, which arose about Mr. Maurice's Essays, and my own little volume of Sermons, brought the whole subject closely before me. And for the last seven years I have carefully studied it, with an earnest desire to know the truth of God upon the matter, and with an humble prayer for the guidance and teaching of His Holy Spirit in the search for it. I now declare that I can no longer maintain, or give utterance to, the doctrine of the endlessness of 'future punishments,'—that I dare not dogmatise at all on the matter,—that I can only lay my hand upon my mouth, and leave it in the hands of the righteous and merciful Judge. But I see that the word 'eternal' does not mean 'endless.' And, for such reasons as the following, I entertain the 'hidden hope' that there are remedial processes, when this life is ended, of which at present we know nothing, but which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, will administer, as He in His Wisdom shall see to be good.

(i.) There is, in the secret heart of Christians generally, a common feeling that such is the case. At this moment, the great mass of Christendom believes in some remedial process after death. A small section only of the Church Universal, a portion only of the Protestant body, and by no means the whole of it, contends that the hour of dissolution from the mortal body fixes the condition of the soul for ever and ever, in endless, unutterable joy, or in endless, unutterable woe. A very intelligent priest of the Abyssinian Church, speaking on this subject to Dr. Krapf, illustrated his views, and, it is presumed, those of the most thoughtful of his Church, as follows. 'It is true that those who die in sin, have nothing but darkness before them. But, *from behind this world*, there fall some few rays of light into their path, which tend to lighten their dark night a little. And, if they make a proper use of those rays, they will increase, and by degrees lead them to a full light.' (*Journal of the Church Mission to Abyssinia and Egypt, by Isenberg and Krapf, published by the Church Missionary Society*, p. 131.) The Church of Rome distinctly asserts an intermediate state of remedial processes as a part of its Creed; but it then proceeds to lay down the laws of it, which are not revealed to us, and to exercise the

powers of it, which are not committed unto man. Those Protestants, then, who cling to this dogma, are, at all events, peculiar in their views, and are in a small minority compared with the mass of Christendom. The great majority of Christians, pious Romanists, such as Bossuet, Fénelon, Pascal, have read the Scriptures, and read them still, without drawing such conclusions, as those expressed in this dogma, from the passages which are usually relied upon for its support, and which we must suppose them to have read and well considered.

(ii.) In fact, whatever explanation may be given of those passages, we find in Holy Scripture such words as these: 'That servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.' Luke xii. 47, 48. Now, whatever those other passages may seem at first sight to say, they must not have a meaning assigned to them, which shall contradict this. And what does this plainly tell us? Surely, that there will be gradations of punishment, as we generally suppose there will be of bliss. But can there be any possible gradations of *endless, infinite, irremediable* woe? Can the punishment in any sense be spoken of as one of *few stripes*, where the unutterably dreadful doom is still assigned of endless banishment from the Presence of God, and all beautiful and blessed things, into the outer darkness, among all accursed things, where not one single ray of Divine Mercy can ever enter? It seems impossible. The very essence of such perdition is utterly, and for ever and ever, to lose sight of the Blessed Face of God. If it be certain that never, never, in the infinite, endless ages to come, shall one ray of Divine Light shine upon the gloom, in which the condemned soul is plunged, how can such a state be described as one of 'few stripes,' however differing from that of another soul, by the pangs of bodily pain being less acute, or even (if it be conceivable) the anguish of mind being less intense? One single ray of the Light of God's Countenance would make Hell cease to be Hell, as it is commonly understood; for where that Light comes, in any form, in any measure, there is Love, and where there is Love, there must be Hope. But never to have the possibility of again beholding our Father's Face, that, that would be the horror of all horrors! What would all bodily or mental pains whatever be, compared with the anguish of being shut out for ever and ever from all hope of beholding one ray of that Light? And even bodily or mental pain, however diminished, yet if continued without cessation or relief, for ever and ever, how can this be spoken of as 'few stripes'? Is it not plain that, but for a preconceived notion, formed from other passages, which shall be presently considered, such words as these would be understood at once, in

their natural sense, to say that there is 'beating,' indeed, for all, who have 'done things worthy of stripes,' but in proportion to the measure of the fault of each servant, some receiving more, and some fewer stripes, as the righteous Judge shall order?

(iii.) Further, when we consider a multitude of cases, it is inconceivable that the hour of death should, under the government of a Just and Holy Judge, draw the line sharply between all those who shall be admitted to endless blessedness, and all those who shall be consigned to endless woe. The infinite shades of difference, which discriminate the moral characters of men, can, indeed, and will, be taken into account by Him, who knows the hearts and lives of all, and can say how far the guilty stain has arisen not willingly—from the helplessness of childhood, it may be, or the ignorance of heathenism, from the fault of parents, the carelessness of teachers, the inexperience of youth, the force of temptation, the pressure of circumstances,—or wilfully, from the deliberate, determined, purpose of men, 'keeping back the truth in unrighteousness.' Our God and Father, Blessed be His Name, can take account of all, and will do so, and judge with righteous judgment accordingly. But where can the line be drawn between the two classes, when the nearest members of the one touch so closely upon those of the other, so that all of the one class shall be admitted at once to never-ending bliss, and all of the other class shall be consigned to never-ending, infinite woe? In point of fact, how many thoughtful clergy of the Church of England have ever deliberately taught, in plain outspoken terms, this doctrine? How many of the more intelligent laity or clergy do really, in their heart of hearts, believe it?

(iv.) For is no remedial process, are no 'stripes' whatever, of any kind, needed even for many of those, who yet, as we humbly trust, shall be suffered to enter into life, whom, at all events, it would be a fearful and horrible thing to suppose consigned to never-ending misery? Are there not many Christians to be met with daily in the common intercourse of life, persons whom, in the main, we must believe to be sincere in their profession, yet whose weak and imperfect characters often betray them into faults, which are unworthy of the Name they bear? Do not these seem to need some cleansing process after death, to purify their souls from sin,—not the sin in their nature only, but sin too often allowed and indulged in the life? Are we not, most of us, all of us, conscious to ourselves, of our own individual need of some such a gracious operation, to purge out from us the remainder of corruption, and fit us for the more immediate Presence of our God? Granted that there will be vessels, small and great, in the Kingdom of God, and each vessel full of its own sweet joy,—children, who have died on the mother's breast, or who have only practised in the nursery the first

simple lessons of love and duty,—boys and girls, who have but just begun to feel the power of evil, and to learn to overcome temptation,—young men and maidens, who have been called away, just as they were about to enter on the busy work of life, and engage in the conflict,—men and women in their prime, who have been withdrawn from the battle, while fighting the good fight, and doing their Master's work, with all their might, with the help He gave them,—aged saints, who have 'kept the faith' unto the end, and finished 'their course' on earth, with ten thousand rich experiences, with deeper knowledge of God's Love, and of their own necessities,—pastors or philanthropists labouring at home, missionaries abroad,—some, who wait patiently from day to day upon the sick and dying, others who have cast in their lot, for love's sake, with the fallen and the outcast,—the soldier, pressing on from field to field, in his path of duty, the sailor, from the sense of duty, making his death-bed in the icy north—the Confessor with his stripes, the Martyr with his cross. All these, with their different stores of Divine Wisdom, having found their highest life while laying down the lower in the service of their Lord, shall each, as we can readily conceive, enter at once, when they leave this world, upon a state of joy proportioned to that which they have reached here on earth; their life hereafter will be continuous with this, and so grow on, when time shall be no longer.

But will not some of these need something, some change or remedial process, to pass upon them, before they can enter freely and fully upon this? One, for instance, shall have been brought to repentance in after life, when many deeds of guilt and shame have been registered against his soul in the awful records of his memory, and many a disfiguring scar has been left upon his spiritual frame. To the last moment of his life, these things will pain and grieve him. He will feel that they may be, as he trusts they are, forgiven; but they are not wholly done away. With memories such as these about him, with scars such as these upon him, he cannot surely be fitted to mix at once, as he is, with the pure and blessed ones; nay, he cannot bear the thought of it himself. In some way or other, there must be a process, be it long or momentary,—we know not how or what it will be,—by which this will be effected. Having done 'things worthy of stripes,' there will be stripes.

We have no difficulty, then, in admitting the idea of a remedial process in the case of *some* after death. But, surely, the most saintly character, when viewed in the light of God's Holiness, will have manifold imperfections, spots and stains, which he himself will rejoice to have purged away, though it may be 'by stripes,'—by stripes not given in anger and displeasure, but in tenderest love and wisdom, by Him who dealeth with us as

with sons. If there be any, from whom the Fatherly chastenings of God in this life have already removed all such remainder of evil, doubtless they may not need any further treatment of this kind, when they are called from their work in this world to enter their Eternal Home. This may be the case, too, with infants and young children,—with such as have not transgressed, either wilfully or ignorantly, the Law of their Lord. But can it be true of many adult Christians? There seems to be, in Rev. xiv. 1—4, a reference to such as these, a small and limited number, the ‘hundred and forty-four thousand,’ who had ‘the Father’s name written in their foreheads,’—the ‘virgin souls,’ who ‘follow the Lamb, whithersoever He goeth,’—who ‘have been bought from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and the Lamb,’ the firstfruits, we may trust, of a large and goodly harvest,—‘in whose mouth was found no guile, for *they are without fault* before the Throne of God.’

But, in the case of the ordinary Christian, of whom we think and speak hopefully, and should tremble, indeed, for ourselves, if we could not, yet how many defects and faults of habit and temper will still be found hanging about him, which unfit him, as he leaves this world, for the Company in Light. It *may* be, certainly, (though the Scripture says nothing of this,) that a sudden change will be made; and, ‘in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,’ such as these shall find every such hindrance, to their entering at once upon the fulness of their joy, removed. The ‘dying thief,’ for instance, viewing his case, as it is ordinarily viewed, as one of *sudden* conversion from a life of gross wickedness,—(though I see no reason to hold that view myself, it will serve to many as a type of such instances,)—*may* have been so purified at once from all defilement, his heart *may* have been so quickened with the full burst of spiritual life, that when, that night, he entered ‘Paradise,’ he found himself at once, not merely able to rejoice in the delights of that blessed abode, but *fully* able to do so,—without one memory of the past to trouble him, without one trace left behind of his former career of evil, without the least vexing sense of any loss he had experienced, by long continuance in wilful sin, without any knowledge even of such loss, without anything to damp, or even moderate, his own proper measure of joy, without the least consciousness that he had not spent his former life in perfect purity, as became a child of God. But, surely, we cannot believe this, without a direct revelation to assure us of it. At least, all the analogies of this life, which we do know, are against such a supposition. They would lead us to believe that we shall assuredly be followed in the next world by some recollections of our doings in this, by some direct consequences of those doings, whether good or evil. And, as we certainly do lose ground, in the way of Life Eternal, by the indulgence

of any habit of known sin, by any one habit of wilful conscious evil, so the sense of such loss may attend us in another world,—not to embitter, but to humble and moderate our joy,—to make us thankful that, although our feet may not stand at first so near the Everlasting Throne as they *might* have been, but for our own past wilful sin and folly, yet that there is progress and growth in another world as well as in this.

(v.) For, surely, all analogy teaches also to expect this, namely, that there will be *growth* in the world to come as well as in this. Not only will they, that shall shine brightly as the stars of heaven, differ from one another in glory at their first appearing, but the brightness of any one shall change and increase, as the ages roll on. We cannot suppose that the hoary-headed Christian of ripe experience, and the untried infant or young child,—the faithful servant, that has followed his Lord through all trials and distresses, perchance to a bloody death, and he, who, till a late hour of life, has wasted his Lord's goods all along in the Devil's service,—shall begin at once equally to partake of the joys of the Eternal World. If it be said that the servant in the parable, who wrought for one hour only, was made equal to others, who had borne the heat and burden of the day, the answer is plain. In the parable, there is no reference to the case of those, who had been *often* called, but refused to work. Those called last, when summoned, went at once to their labour, with, at least, as much zeal as the first. They were sitting idle, 'because no man had hired them.' And the whole parable is intended to teach us, what St. Paul will lay down more fully in this very Epistle, that the Lord, the righteous Judge, will 'do what He will with His own.' He knows where and how to reward and bless, and where and in what measure to punish.

We can admit, then, as, in fact, most thoughtful Christians do admit, that there will be differences at first in glory among those, to whom a joyful entrance shall be given into God's Kingdom in Heaven,—that there also, as on Earth, there will be some, who shall enjoy a closer converse with their Lord, and lean, as it were, upon His Breast, while others shall 'stand and wait' in His Blissful Presence, though all shall have their share in the rich Banquet of His Love. Servants, who have been entrusted with five talents, or with two, or, it may be, with some small fraction of a talent, and who shall have been found faithful, shall all together enter into the joy of their Lord. But they, that have been faithful with a little in this lower service, shall now be charged with proportionately higher duties, and more glorious offices, in the Kingdom of Light; he, that 'hath gained ten pounds,' shall 'have rule over ten cities,' he, that hath gained five, over five.

But, as we believe that there will be such differences of glory at first in the Heavenly Kingdom, so we cannot doubt that there will be a growth

and progress also in glory. We cannot suppose that the spirit of an infant, or young child, will remain always in the undeveloped state in which death found it; nor have we any ground whatever to think that it will, suddenly, and in a moment, expand at once in all its powers, to the full perfection of which it is capable. Scripture does not inform us on the subject: analogy is wholly against such a supposition. In all nature, there is no instance of such a sudden start into fulness of life, of such a break of continuity,—as this would be. And would it not, in fact, contradict the very idea of *life* itself, if there were to be no such growth and progress? Are we not told that, even now, to the principalities and powers in heavenly places, are being made known by the Church, more and more fully, as the ages go by, the wonderful Wisdom of God? Is it not, moreover, a main ingredient in our joy, when we think of the blessedness of Heaven, that it will be *progressive*,—that, through the ages all along, our knowledge of our Father's Glory and Wisdom and Goodness will ever be deepening, while, perchance, we shall be employed, as ministers of His, to do His Pleasure, in other work which He shall find for us in His boundless universe?

May there be *decrease* also of joy in Heaven? We cannot tell. Perchance there may be. Our first parents, we are told, were created innocent, and placed in Paradise; and yet they fell. We are told also that Angels of Light, who once stood near the Throne, have 'left their first estate.' And it may be that the permanence of our joy hereafter may not consist in any fancied security, as if evil could not tempt us, or reach us in any form, but in our being made like unto the Son of God, our Saviour, with bodies, as well as spirits, redeemed from sin, and able, therefore, in that Strength and Life, which flows to us from Communion with our Head, to do, as He did, at all times, when tempted, and tread our enemy under our feet. But, gifted with higher, more glorious faculties than those which we now have, and, doubtless, having higher work to do in God's Kingdom, why should we not have trial in that work, as here,—not, indeed, of our faith, where we shall walk by sight,—but yet of our faithfulness? Will the blessedness of our future state be maintained by our being absolutely secured from all possibility of falling, or shall we be left free agents, as here, to do lovingly our Father's Will, in His more immediate Presence, with the glorious powers which He will then impart to us, and the glorified spiritual bodies which we shall then have given to us, in place of these corruptible and mortal tabernacles? We cannot answer this question: we cannot go further into it. For we touch here upon that great mystery, the *existence* of sin and evil at all in the Universe, under the Government of a Holy and Blessed Being, and the *term* and measure of its existence, when and how it shall be done away.



(vi.) Seeing, then, that we can recognise even for some of those, who in the main are good and true, a possibility, rather, a probability, and even a necessity, of 'stripes,' and a presumption, almost amounting to certainty, of growth and progress, an upward, onward tendency in the state of spiritual being, in the world to come, we may reasonably recognise something of the same kind as possible in the case of all, of the whole human race, who (as St. Paul says in the text before us) 'shall one day be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.' He, who has been pleased to subject them to their present state, has 'subjected them in hope' of this. Stripes, more or less, according to the judgment of the All-knowing and All-righteous, may be, and, doubtless, will be, appointed in His Wisdom and Mercy, for those who need them; 'indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish,' must be the portion,—our own hearts plainly tell us this, as well as the Bible,—of every one who 'keepeth back the truth in unrighteousness,' of every one who 'worketh out evil.' We bow to this rule, as holy and righteous; we glorify God for it; we rejoice, even while self-condemned ourselves, at the very idea of such a judgment as this. But, that utter, unspeakable misery should be the portion, for endless ages, for ever and ever, alike of all, who are not admitted at first into the realms of infinite joy,—that there shall be no hope, in the horrible outer darkness, for the ignorant young child of some wretched outcast, who has been noted by the teachers of the Ragged or the Sunday School, as having contracted some evil habit, it may be, of lying, stealing, swearing, or indecency, any more than for the sensual libertine, who has spent a long life in gratifying his lusts, and has been the means of that child, and others like it, being born in guilt and shame, and nursed in profligacy,—our hearts, taught as they are by God's Spirit, instinctively revolt at such a dogma, as a blasphemy upon the Name and Character of the High and Holy One, and refuse to believe it, though a thousand texts of Scripture should be produced, which may seem, at first sight, to assert it.

(vii.) For we must never forget that this witness within our hearts is the Voice of God. We can only know God, His moral attributes, His Justice, Mercy, and Truth, by what we know in ourselves of these excellencies. The Bible reveals to us the Mind and Will of God. Our Blessed Lord Himself, in His own Person, exhibited the brightness of His Father's Glory to us; He showed us plainly of the Father. The Spirit now takes of the things of God and Christ, and reveals them to us. But what would all this avail, if we were like the brutes that perish,—if we had no power to see what is revealed, uncovered, to our eyes,—if we had no power to appreciate the excellency which we look upon? We could not understand, by any

mere description, the nature of a colour which we had never seen. We must have something in ourselves, which bears relation to that which is without, before we can apprehend, before we can know it. And so because we are not brute creatures, but made in the image of our God and Father, with our imperfect goodness of any kind ever shadowing forth, really and truly, however faintly, His Eternal, unutterable excellencies,—because we have that within us, which bears relation to the Perfect Righteousness, and Truth, and Love, which is in God—therefore it is that we recognise and rejoice in the full revelation of those Perfections in our Lord's own Life, and the fainter emanations from the same blessed Source of Light, which we see in the better acts of our fellow-man, or which we may be enabled to manifest even in our own. God, then, has given this Light of the inner man to be the very guide and polestar of our lives,—that Light, which would enable our minds to see and recognise, if we will, whatever is properly presented to them of the good, and true, and pure, and loving, and to discern what is evil, false, and wicked, even while our own corrupt will may refuse to embrace what the mind approves, or the man may deliberately shut his eyes to the Light, under the impulse of lust or covetousness, passion or pride, contempt or hatred, and resolve, or, at least, be content, not to see what it discloses. That Light is, in fact, none other than the shining of the One True Light within us, 'which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world,'—which is given to every man that he may profit withal, that he may see the path of life and duty, and make good his way to the Kingdom of God. By that Light within us, the acts of our own lives must be judged, and, when necessity requires it, the acts of others also. By that Light, the sayings and doings of good men, the acts of the Church, the proceedings and decisions of her Fathers and Councils, the writings of Prophets and Apostles, the words recorded to have been uttered by our Blessed Lord Himself, must all be tried. 'We must try the spirits, whether they are of God.' If they are required, on the *supposed* authority of the Church, or of St. Peter or St. Paul, to believe that, which contradicts the Law of Righteousness and Truth and Love, which God, with the finger of His Spirit, has written upon our hearts, we are sure that there must be error somewhere. Either we have misinterpreted the words of Scripture, or we have missed their connexion, or we have lost sight of the real point and spirit of the passage, insisting on the mere letter of the word, and some minor particulars, which were only thrown in to fill up the imagery, but were never intended to bind our consciences. To the man himself there is but one lawgiver. He, 'that sitteth upon the Throne, judging righteously,' has set His own Law to be a Law of Life within the heart of every man. Whatever contradicts that Law, whether it be the

word of man, or the dictum of a Church, or the supposed teaching of the Holy Scripture, cannot, ought not to, be a Law for him. Things innumerable, in the Scripture, and in the world at large, may, indeed, *transcend* a man's intellect and perplex his understanding; but he receives them as true, because, in some way or other, he has satisfied his judgment as to the authority on which they rest. One has persuaded himself of the paramount authority of the Church, another of that of the Scripture; and, having thus satisfied his private judgment, he may be willing to receive without questioning what appears to him to be delivered to him by the one or the other. But no seeming authority of the Church or Scripture *ought* to persuade a man to believe anything, which contradicts that moral law, that sense of righteousness, and purity, and truth, and love, which God's own finger has written upon his heart. The voice of that inner witness is closer to him than any that can reach him from without, and ought to reign supreme in his whole being. The Light, in which he there sees light, the Voice which he hears, is the Light of the Divine Word, is the Voice of his Lord.

We may be certain, then, that any interpretation of Scripture, which contradicts that sense of right which God Himself, our Father, has given us, to be a witness for His own perfect excellencies, must be set aside, as having no right to crush down, as with an iron heel, into silence the indignant remonstrance of our whole spiritual being. And it cannot be denied that there is such a remonstrance heard most distinctly in the heart of every man at first,—in the hearts of most men, even when with their lips they may profess a constrained assent to it,—against the dogma, which, indeed, in these our days, is very seldom stated in plain words in the presence of any intelligent congregation, but which expresses the doctrine, as usually understood, of 'Endless Punishment.' This dogma makes no distinction between those who have done things worthy of many stripes and those who have done things worthy of few,—between the profligate sensualist and the ill-trained child. And it is often so stated as to involve the multitudes of ignorant, untaught heathen, the great mass of human-kind, in the same horrible doom of never-ending despair, making this beautiful and blessed world the very shambles, as it were, of Almighty Vengeance, while some few individuals, called by the name of Christians, but living comfortably all the while, notwithstanding their professed belief that myriads of their fellow-men are, every moment, passing into perdition, will, by some special act of Divine favour, be so fortunate as to be excepted from it. I need hardly say that the whole Epistle to the Romans is one of the strongest possible protests against such a notion.

That, however, the above is no strained representation of what some

good men have taught and teach, I shall prove by quoting here again a specimen of such teaching, which I copy from pp. 251, 252, of the Journal of my first visitation of the Diocese of Natal (*Ten Weeks in Natal*).

"I read the following passage upon a scrap of an American Missionary Intelligencer. It was the report of a colporteur, who was describing to his employers the manner in which he conducted his ministry, entering first one house and then another, and distributing according to the necessities of each. In one, for instance, he would find the people careless and negligent in divine things, and then he would talk to them about the *heathen*, and what would become of *them*, and ask what would become of themselves, if they lived like heathen. 'They would perish like those heathen; and their children, about whom they thought so much, would twine about them, like creepers on a gnarled oak, and they would burn—burn—burn on, for ever!'

"Here is another passage from the correspondence of a Missionary. Writing of the heathen, he says, 'Every hour, yea, every moment, they are dying, most of them without any knowledge of the Saviour. On whom, now, rests the responsibility? If you fail to do all in your power to save them, will you stand at the judgment guiltless of their blood?' Said a heathen child, after having embraced the Gospel, to the writer, 'How long have they had the Gospel in New England?' When told, she asked with great earnestness, 'Why did they not come and tell us before?' and then added, 'My mother died, and my father died, and my brother died, without the Gospel.' Here she was unable to restrain her emotions. But, at length, wiping away her tears, she asked, 'Where do you think they have gone?' I, too, could not refrain from weeping, and turning to her, I enquired, 'Where do *you* think they have gone?' She hesitated a few moments, and then replied, with much emotion, 'I suppose they have gone down to the dark place—the dark place! Oh! why did they not tell us before?' It wrung my heart, as she repeated the question, 'Why did they not tell us before?'"

That such views as these are not confined to one class of teachers only, may be gathered from another passage, which I will now quote, from a prayer printed for the use of a Missionary Institution (I am sorry to say) of the Church of England.

'O Eternal God, Creator of all things, *mercifully remember* that the souls of unbelievers are the work of Thy hands, and that they are created in Thy resemblance. Behold, O Lord, *how hell is filled with them*, to the dishonour of thy Holy Name. *Remember* that Jesus Christ, thy Son, for their salvation, suffered a most cruel death. Permit not, we beseech Thee, that He should be despised by the heathen around us. *Vouchsafe to be propitiated* by the prayers of the Church, Thy most holy Spouse, and call to mind Thine own compassion.'

These words seemed to me to be little short of blasphemy. And, as I have done before, so do I now set forward these passages, to enter, in the

Name of God's Truth and God's Love, my most solemn protest against them, as utterly contrary to the whole spirit of the Gospel,—as obscuring the Grace of God, and perverting His Message of 'Goodwill to Man,' and operating, with most injurious and deadening effect, both on those who teach, and on those who are taught. If such were, indeed, the condition of the heathen world, how could a Christian, with any brotherly love, with any love for his kind in his bosom, consent to enjoy for one moment any of the commonest blessings of daily life?

(viii.) One passage of Scripture has been referred to, which evidently points to some distinction of Divine chastisements, to some equitable measuring of 'stripes,' according to men's works. Are there any others which tend in the same direction? There are, indeed, not many individual passages, which disclose to us in any way the mysteries of the invisible world; though the whole tenor of Scripture teaches throughout the same lesson, that God will render to every man, justly and righteously, according to his deeds,—to Jew and Gentile, Christian or Heathen, alike, without respect of persons, each according to the Light vouchsafed to him, each according to the talents, or the merest fraction of a talent, committed to his charge.

But attention may be called to such passages as the following.

Matt. x. 15. 'Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.'

We are told elsewhere (Jude 7) that 'these cities are set forth as an example, suffering the vengeance of *eternal fire*.' And yet here we find that, in the very midst of that 'eternal fire,' the punishment shall be 'more tolerable' for some than for others,—a difference shall be made between those who have sinned very grievously in their heathen state in ignorance of the Gospel, and those who have wilfully shut their eyes to the Light which came to them, and loved the darkness rather than the light, because their deeds were evil.

How is it possible that the judgment in one case should be 'more tolerable' than in the other, if in both the same ingredient is found, which is the very essence of the woe of Hell, as popularly understood, namely, the horror of helpless, hopeless misery, in utter, dark despair, shut out for endless, endless ages, from any possibility of ever seeing again one single ray of the Light of God's Mercy? And what right have we, poor, wretched, ignorant creatures of the dust, thus to limit the Mercies of our God, to bind Him down to our narrow notions and positive interpretations of one or two passages of Scripture, when yet the whole tenor of the Sacred Book, and other separate passages, and our human hearts also, with their best and and strongest utterances, are manifestly teaching us a different lesson? If, indeed, the 'eternal fire' be the ever-burning wrath of a Holy Being

against all sin, that is, against all wilful evil, so long as that evil continues to exist, it is conceivable that they, who sinned against their better light and knowledge in Sodom and Gomorrha, and they that have similarly sinned under the Gospel, may alike be subjected to the vengeance of that fire; and that, on those who had more light given them than others, and have most abused it, the judgments will be sorer and more permanent. But, were there not infants, too, and young children—perhaps maniacs,—in Sodom and Gomorrha? Were these, too, sunk in infinite and endless horror?

Luke xvi. We have in this chapter the story of Lazarus, in which our Lord assumes that, even in the place of torment, there will be loving, tender thoughts, in a brother's heart. If there can be such, as they cannot come from the Spirit of Evil, they must be believed to come from the Spirit of all Goodness. While there is life, there is hope. In fact, the rich man is represented as *less* selfish in the flames of hell than he was in this life. The Eternal Fire has already wrought some good result in him.

1. Cor. iii. 13, &c. 'Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by Fire; and the Fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.'

The Apostle is evidently referring to the 'glorious appearing of the Great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;' and seems to be adopting the powerful images, used by the Prophet Daniel, to express the glory of that day (Dan. vii. 9, &c.). 'The Ancient of days did sit; His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth before Him;' or that of Mal. iv. 1, 'Behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all that do wickedly shall be as stubble.' So here, 'the day will be revealed with Fire, and the Fire will prove each man's work, of what sort it is.' The 'gold and silver and precious stones,' and all that is permanent and enduring, whatever is true and good, indestructible and eternal, in every man's work, will remain, unscathed by the Fire, as it passes over it, and he that wrought it shall have his reward from his Lord. But the 'wood, hay, and stubble,' that which is unsound and rotten, will be destroyed, and the unfaithful worker shall suffer loss, shall be mulcted or fined, though he himself shall be saved, yet as one escaping through the midst of fire. What these figurative words exactly intimate, it is not necessary, and it may be difficult, to decide. But they must mean something; and they plainly imply a righteous judgment of some kind, from which Christian Teachers, though they 'shall be saved,' shall not be

exempt. And, what is true of Teachers, is true of Christians generally. Will not that Eternal Fire, with which that day shall be revealed, burn up the 'wood, hay, and stubble' in the work of every man, leaving only the 'gold and silver,' that which has been good, and true, and pure, and loving in his life, that which is right and sound in his heart? Shall we not all be exposed to that Fire, and need to be so; though with some its work may soon be completed, with others it may burn long and fiercely?

(ix.) But are there not other passages which plainly imply that the wicked shall 'go into *Everlasting Fire*, prepared for the devil and his angels,'—to the place 'where their Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched?'

Certainly there are; only let it be remembered that the word 'endless' is not a proper representative of the word 'Eternal' or 'Everlasting,'—not because it says too much, but because it says too little. 'Everlasting' implies life, permanence, unchangeableness; 'endless' is a mere empty negative, and expresses nothing but that the object is without an end. We can speak of the Everlasting God, and of the Living God, instead of saying the Eternal God; but we feel at once how empty is the formula, if we speak of the Endless, or the Deathless, Being. Surely there is an Eternal, or Everlasting, Fire,—understanding the word 'Fire,' of course, not literally, but of a figure, to represent the Divine Anger and Displeasure, which always has been burning, and ever will be burning, with a living, permanent, unchangeable flame, against all manner of evil, so long as there is evil to be destroyed by it. While evil rules in a man, he must be subject to that Displeasure, because the master is, whose slave the man is, whose service he has chosen. It is so in this life, and the man is conscious of it at times, though at others he may beguile away by occupation, business, or pleasure, the burning sense of that Displeasure. But the time will surely come, when, either in this life, it may be, or in the life to come, it will be revealed fully—that Divine Anger,—that Eternal Fire,—which is burning against sin, against all wilful, allowed evil. And he will not be able to escape it. It may be needful that there should be a dreadful horror in his chastisement, which figures such as these shadow forth. He must be made to feel the gnawing of the undying Worm, which writhed at times within him, and stung him, in the rebukes of his guilty conscience, even in this life; but then it will be commissioned to do thoroughly the work which is needed. He must bear the pain of the unquenchable Fire, the sense of God's just Anger, which he cannot now put away.

But where are we told that those, who are thus committed to the 'Worm' and to the 'Fire,' shall abide with them for ever and ever? 'Their Worm,' the sense of guilt which preys upon them, and 'the Fire,'

the consuming anger of God, are 'eternal realities,' not like the worm and fire, in Gehenna, the valley of Hinnom, which consumed the offal of the Jewish city, which were things transient and temporal, of this world only, and dealt merely with externals, the things of time and sense, the mere flesh and bones that were cast to them. This Worm and this Fire, of which we are now speaking, have to do with eternal realities, with the spirit of man and his spiritual body; they are things permanent and substantial, of which such things, as were before their bodily eyes, were mere earthly shadows. We cannot, indeed, conceive how this Fire and Worm, in the eternal world, will act to produce their effects, of clearing away all filth and corruption, that nothing unclean or defiling, no lie or abomination, may remain undevoured or undestroyed. At the best, the Fire and the Worm are but figures meant to shadow forth to us the things that shall be. As many leave this world, whether in Heathen or in Christian lands, it may seem to us almost past belief that the vessel so defiled should ever be cleansed again, and made fit for the Master's use. And it *may* be so; we cannot assert to the contrary, whatever hidden hope we may entertain. Yet,—as those who looked upon the fall of man, must have seen with dismay the vessel, which God had fashioned for Himself, polluted with sin, and yet saw afterwards the Wisdom and Love, which was working all the while, and out of that death brought abundance of life,—so may there be a triumph yet reserved of light over darkness, of good over evil, when the Son shall have put down *all* enemies under His feet, and God shall be all in all.

That Fire, we have seen, will 'try every man's work, of what sort it is,' and some will 'suffer loss' in that day, while others shall 'receive a reward.' The work of some will 'be burned,' while they themselves shall be 'saved, yet so as by fire.' And, with regard to others, may not that same Fire hold them, until it has burnt up thoroughly all evil within them? It is this *evil*, which God hates, upon which His wrath is revealed, against which His anger burns, for which the Fire is kindled,—this evil, which is destroying His children. If the blessed Gospel message of their Father's Love, though heard, is disregarded, yet, surely, He, who loves them still though prodigal children, will chasten them in His Mercy that He may bring them back unto Himself. The chastisement may begin in this life: how do we know that it will end here? The great mass of Christendom, at all events, believes that it will not end here for *all* men. And may it not be true that the error of the Church of Rome is not in its merely maintaining this principle, to which our human reason, under the impulses of human feeling and the common sympathies of our nature, and guided by certain passages of Scripture, would lead us, but in its laying down a system of



Purgatory by the mere imaginations of men, and undertaking to administer the affairs of the eternal world? Has the Mercy of God never cut off the life of a *bad* man, as well as a good man, to save him from evil to come,—to prevent him from plunging further on into guilt, and having the evil so made to be a part of himself that even the Fire of Hell may not avail to burn it out, without destroying the living being also?

And, when we consider also how many of those who have died in penitence, may have been guilty themselves of corrupting and ruining others, who have run a short course of sin, and been cut off in impenitence, have we no reason to believe that, in some way or other, those who were once the cause of this defacement of God's image in the persons of their fellow-men or women, may likewise have a share assigned to them in the work of restoration,—may never attain,—(and, indeed, it is inconceivable that they should attain, if the things of this world are at all remembered in the next, as we suppose they will be,—) their own full joy, until the evil they have done shall have been, by God's Mercy, undone, and the powers of Hell vanquished, and swallowed up in life?

Such questions as these have been brought again and again before my mind in the intimate converse which I have had, as a Missionary, with Christian converts and Heathens. To teach the truths of our holy religion to intelligent adult natives, who have the simplicity of children, but without the earnestness and thoughtfulness of men,—to whom these things are new and startling, whose minds are not prepared by long familiarity to acquiesce in, if not receive, them,—is a sifting process for the opinions of any teacher, who feels the deep moral obligation of answering truly, and faithfully, and unreservedly, his fellow-man, looking up to him for light and guidance, and asking, 'Are you sure of this?' 'Do you know this to be true?' 'Do you really believe that?' The state of everlasting torment after death, of all impenitent sinners and unbelievers, including the whole heathen world, as many teach, is naturally so amazing and overwhelming an object of contemplation to them, and one so prominently put forward in the case of those, who have been under certain Missionary training, that it quite shuts out the cardinal doctrines of the Gospel, the Fatherly relation to us of the Faithful Creator. The conscience, healthy, though but imperfectly enlightened, does not answer to such denunciations of indiscriminate wrath, and cannot, therefore, appreciate what is represented as redeeming Love, offering a way of escape. Hence missionaries often complain bitterly of the hardness of heart of the heathen, and say that it is impossible to awaken them to a sense of sin. Yet, without such conscience of sin in the hearer, the threats of Divine vengeance can produce no feeling but aversion and a determinate unbelief.

These are questions which deserve to be seriously pondered. We shall have occasion presently to return again to some of them. And, though we may not be able to give a positive answer to them,—though, for reasons of His Wisdom, our Heavenly Father has not seen it good to reveal to us the state of the invisible world, or permitted us to get more than a mere glimpse of the things behind the veil,—yet they may serve to check in us the spirit of positive dogmatism in such matters; they are enough to remind us that these things are too high and too deep for us mortals to profess to comprehend; and so we may leave them calmly in the Hands of Him, who ‘doeth all things’ well.’

262 v. 22. *for we know that all the creature groaneth together, &c.* We know that all men, everywhere, are, more or less, travailing, as it were, in pain, oppressed by physical and spiritual evil, by the presence of sickness, suffering, and death, and the more baleful consequences of sin in themselves. But these pains, though they may not know it, are, in truth, *birthpangs*, which, though to be endured for a while by the Will of Him, who has ‘subjected the whole race in hope,’ are yet tending to a better state of things hereafter. The very fact that we are all suffering here, ‘not of our own accord,’ but through the Will of Him who has subjected us to suffering, is adduced here by the Apostle, as a reason why we may hope for some future great deliverance. So far from being a thing to drive us to despair, under the government of a just and righteous Being, our ‘Faithful Creator,’ it is a thing to give us ground of hope for the whole race.

263. v. 23. *and not only so, &c.* And not only so, but even we ourselves, we, Christians, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit,—who are the first to have been gladdened with the full tidings of our Father’s Love, and who are assured of it by the constant Presence of His Holy Spirit with us, not merely as in the days of old, when the Spirit taught us, indeed, as it taught all men, though the Jews above all others, but with the mightier influences, which have been at work in our hearts since the coming of the Son of God in the flesh, even we still groan within ourselves, from day to day, conscious of infirmity, made aware that we too, like the rest of our race, have been made ‘subject to vanity,’ have been brought into the world by the Will of our Creator, as fallen creatures, though redeemed creatures also.

264. v. 23. *expecting adoption.* The Apostle, then, regarded even Christians as not yet ‘adopted,’ in the full sense of the word, though, of course, they were adopted in that lower sense, in which all mankind are adopted to be children of God, and in the higher sense, in which Christians are said to be ‘adopted,’ declared, avouched, to be children of God, receiv-

ing each for himself, personally, in baptism a formal outward sign of ratification of that adoption, which they shared already, independently of the sign, with the whole race. There is, still, according to St. Paul, a third, and yet higher, sense, in which the expression may be used, to intimate that full and complete reception before the eyes, as it were, of the assembled Universe, into the family of God in Heaven, into His very Home, into His own more immediate Presence, which will be vouchsafed to all who have been found faithful upon earth, (as St. Paul assumes those to be to whom he is writing,) in the day when the 'sons of God,' the good and true of every age and country and creed, shall be manifested.

265. v. 23. *the redemption of our body.* This final adoption will be evidenced by the 'sons of God' having bodies also given to them, fitted for their glorious state, redeemed, as the spirit is already, from the consequences of sin, from the law of sin and death, which, by reason of the 'sin in our nature,' still has power to 'war in our members' against the better law of our mind, to abuse the natural desires of the body, and to tempt the will to consent to sin. We shall never be released from this, and fully redeemed, until the body is taken to pieces, and we receive a new spiritual body, after the fashion of Christ's glorious body, which will be henceforth a willing servant of the law of Righteousness, and cheerfully obey the high behests of the spirit, in doing the Will of its Lord.

## CHAP. VIII. 24—27.

(24) For in hope we were saved. But hope, being seen, is not hope; for, what one sees, why does he also hope for? (25) But if, what we see not, we hope for, then do we with perseverance expect it. (26) And likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities. For what we should pray for, as we ought, we know not; but the Spirit itself intercedeth for us with sighs not uttered. (27) But He, who searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because, according to God *the Spirit* intercedeth for the saints.

## NOTES.

266. v. 24. *in hope we were saved.* 'We were saved in hope,' says the Apostle. Our salvation was wrought in the counsels of God's Wisdom,

from all eternity, though wrought in time when our Blessed Lord had finished His Work. And still the same counsels of Wisdom have made our salvation not a matter of right at present, but one of trust and hope. 'We were saved in hope' also, at the time God's message in the Gospel came home to our hearts, and was embraced by us. This is God's Will, for purposes of His own Almighty Wisdom, that we shall not see plainly, with our bodily eyes, the certainty of these things, but shall see them with the eyes of our mind, with the eyes of faith and hope, ever realizing them more surely and fully, as we walk more closely with God. We are to take God at His Word, and believe that we are justified, children, beloved, though we *see* in ourselves, and in our brethren, and in the state of things around us in the world, so much which apparently contradicts that belief. We have however, much, very much, to reassure us, in what we can *see* of our Father's 'loving-kindness to man' in general, and of His special mercies to ourselves in particular. 'Whoso is wise, will ponder these things, and they shall understand,' in some measure, 'the Goodness of the Lord.' And we have the abiding pledge of His Favour in the help and teaching of His Holy Spirit. So that we may boldly say, 'The Lord our God is with us; who or what shall be against us?' We may confidently trust and believe in our Father's Love; and believe also that this 'vanity,' from which we now suffer, shall be done away hereafter, as He has promised, and we shall be set free in our bodies also, as we are already in our spirits, from the consequences of the Fall. Just so was Abraham made righteous, yet only 'in hope,' by God's assuring grace, not by any thing he had, or could have seen, in himself *before* this declaration, nor by any change he saw or felt in himself *after* it. He continued still the same imperfect, unrighteous being, in himself, that he had always been from his birth-hour. It was purely the outspoken word of grace which he had to trust to, declaring that, in God's sight, he was regarded as righteous then and there, though he felt in himself unrighteousness, and pledging God's faithfulness to confirm the truth of this, by certain gracious consequences, to be wrought out for him and for his seed hereafter. He 'believed in hope,' until out of his body, as good as dead, was raised up in Isaac a new life, and he saw thus far the completion of the promises, and saw by faith yet brighter things to come.

267. v. 25. *then do we with perseverance expect it.* This, the Apostle means to say, is one consequence, at all events, of our being saved thus 'in hope,' and not 'by sight.' We cannot sound all the depths of the Divine Wisdom. But this we can see, that this expecting, and having to wait for, the full enjoyment of our privileges, is part of our training, part of that gracious discipline, which God uses, to beget in us the true spirit

of His children, that of 'patient continuance in well-doing,' as being good in itself, and sure of his ultimate blessing, however, for the present, it may be attended with all manner of 'tribulations.' It is His Will that we shall be thus taught to 'persevere,' to 'quietly hope and patiently wait for the salvation of God.' It is thus that He designs to raise up for His service hereafter, not mere machines, but living agents of His Will, inspired with His Spirit, and, of their own free choice,—like sons and daughters, well-trained in childhood under due restraints, but now grown up to exercise the functions of maturer life,—by no constrained compulsion, from no mere selfish principle, because they will then see and enjoy abundantly the things they now hope for,—obeying cheerfully and lovingly the inspiration. Whether any other system of education would have sufficed for this, it passes all our power to know or think. But this is what our Father has ordained for us, not merely as a correction of the evil of the Fall, as if, when He made man at first, His purpose was really blighted by the cunning of the Tempter, and by the folly of the creature He had made. But the mystery, which St. Paul discloses, as now revealed in the Gospel, is this, that, before the foundation of the world, this was the Will and Purpose of the Almighty, to gather up all things in Christ as their Head. The Fall of Man was permitted as a part of this Divine scheme; but so that, as in the first Adam all died, in the second Adam all might be made alive, and blessings, infinitely more, be bestowed upon every member of the race, through the obedience of the one, than were lost by the disobedience of the other. Such is the doctrine of St. Paul, in chap. vi. of this Epistle. It is only intelligible when we take it in connexion with the words of chap. viii. which are now before us, and those which we have just been considering, 'the whole of humanity is expecting the manifestation of the sons of God.'

268. v. 26. *likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, &c.* Likewise, *also*, in addition to the encouragement which our *hope* of the glorious future gives us, we have the present comfort and help of the Holy Spirit. Our Father's loving Voice is heard by means of His Spirit, speaking in the very centre of our being, very near and very close to us,—the Spirit bearing witness with our spirits that, indeed, we are His children. The feeble, incoherent cries which we utter, while our will obeys the law of our spirit, have a meaning given them by the Father of spirits, when He hears them. He hears in them the voice of His own good Spirit, under whose influences, acting on our spirits, and through them on our obedient wills, those cries are uttered. Our thoughts are oftentimes too deep for words. The desires, which swell our hearts, cannot be expressed in human language. But those longings, which He Himself has quickened, those sighings of desire, which,

under the gracious inspirations of His Spirit, our inner man is ever breathing forth towards Him, and towards the remembrance of His Holiness and Love, He hears, though unuttered. It is His own gracious Will, part of the wondrous provision which He has made for us, that His Spirit should thus abide with us, and teach us, and work in us, and breathe in our breath of prayer, and speak in our words of truth, and act in our deeds of faithfulness and love. When all other things fail us, and the Scripture itself becomes, as it has at times become to many, as it may for a moment become to us, a source of doubt and perplexity, instead of a spring of hope, yet about this there need to be no doubt in the heart of any man, that, so long as we have one single good thought or wish within us, one wish to be drawn nearer to God, or to be rid of the besetting evil which plagues us, we have a sign that the Spirit of our Father is present even now with our spirits, is witnessing even now with our spirits that we are not treated as aliens and foes, but as children. For the Spirit of God is even then 'helping our infirmities,' and 'making intercession for us,' in God's own way, by His own express appointment, 'according to His Will.'

#### CHAP. VIII. 28—30.

(28) We know too that, to those who love God, all things work together for good, being called according to a purpose. (29) For, whom He foreknew, He also marked out beforehand to be conformed to the image of His Son, that so He might be the firstborn among many brethren. (30) But, whom He foreknew, those He also called; and, whom He called, those He also justified; and, whom He justified, those He also glorified.

#### NOTES.

269. v. 28. *We know too that, to those who love God, all things work together for good, being called according to a purpose.* Not only have we the assurance of our justified state before God, and the hope of future glory to cheer us, and the present help and comfort of the Spirit to sustain us, amidst all the 'tribulations,' bodily and spiritual, of this present state of 'vanity,' to which it is God's Will to 'subject' us, but we know that our very trials themselves, both of body and mind, are all working out together good for us, for us who 'love God,' and desire that our Father's Will may be

wrought in us and by us. We know this, because we 'have been called according to a purpose.'

The Apostle is speaking expressly of Christians who have been called to the knowledge of God's Grace in the Gospel, and have embraced lovingly their Father's Message of Life. But the words are true, of all men, everywhere, who have obeyed the call, however called, however awakened. It is true that, 'loving God,' listening to the Voice which speaks within them, continuing patiently in well-doing, according to that measure of the Perfect Law of Truth, and Righteousness, and Purity, and Love, which has been revealed to them, 'all things shall work together for their good,' inasmuch as they, too, have been 'called according to a purpose.' Not without 'purpose' has the word of God been carried to the heart of any man. Not without a meaning has the Light of Life been given to lighten any man that has come into the world. It is an express token of God's Favour to that individual man—a sign of God's 'Purpose' towards him, that, taught by that Word, and lightened by that Light, he should become ever more and more 'conformed to the image of His Son.'

270. v. 29. *whom He foreknew, &c.* What does St. Paul mean by this expression? Shortly after, he says, (xi. 2,) 'God hath not cast away his people, whom He *foreknew*.' It is plain that He means to speak of the people of Israel, as having been fixed upon beforehand in the Providence of God, to receive certain special signs of His Favour, bestowed upon the *whole* people,—though many of them, *individually*, were, in fact, unfaithful and disobedient, while others, as infants and young children, at all events, could have had no title whatever to share in such grace, except as being members of a family, which God had 'foreknown' for blessing. Just so here, those, whom God 'foreknew' for special gifts of His Grace, are the whole body of those, who have actually received the awakening, inward call of God's Spirit in their hearts, not merely the outward call of the minister or missionary, which may not reach the conscience of the hearer, often through the many defects of the preacher, and through no fault of the man. But, whenever God Himself has 'called' a man, there He had a gracious 'purpose' specially towards that individual man, He 'foreknew' him for a special blessing,—namely, to be brought more and more into 'conformity to the image of His Son.' The man may obey the call of God's Spirit, or not; he may surrender his will to be led by the Divine Guide, or he may resist and grieve the Holy Spirit of Grace. But God's gracious purpose remains the same in thus calling him. Whomsoever He called, He *meant* to be made more and more like unto their Lord; He 'marked them out beforehand to be conformed to the image of His Son.' That many fall short of this end, for which they were called, for

which they were foreknown, is true, as many fell short of the end for which God foreknew the people of Israel. But the mind and loving purpose of God remains the same.

And this is the point on which the Apostle's stress is laid in this passage, namely, that Christians should have the most *entire undoubting confidence* in the Goodwill of their Heavenly Father towards them. He, for His part, is faithful, who has called them to His Kingdom and Glory. Having received the call, they may be sure that they are *meant* for a glorious end, and that nothing will be wanting, in the wise provisions of their Father's Love, which is needed to accomplish that end. He fully *intends* to bless us, every one of us, whom He calls to the knowledge of His Love. We are not called *idly*, by chance, as it were, or merely to be saved from the yawning gulf of perdition, which is all ready to swallow us up, while the mass of the human race are left to perish most miserably. But He has called us with a clearer voice than others. He has specially called us near unto Himself for a special end, with an express purpose in view, that we should be 'conformed to the image of His Son.' God, in the infinite counsels of His Wisdom, from all eternity, foreknew us for this, that His Son should be our Head, should be 'the first-born of many brethren, and we all should be made like unto Him.' His purpose is to 'bring many sons to glory,' to have, as it were, a chosen inner family of sons and daughters, who shall dwell nearer to the Throne than others, all like unto their Elder Brother, all willing servants of Righteousness, and Truth, and Purity, and Love.

271. v. 30. *whom He foreknew, those He also justified, &c.* If this, then, be God's purpose in calling us, if He predestined us for this particular end, how can we doubt that He will make all things work together towards effecting that purpose, towards attaining that end? See every step of the work He does Himself, most graciously and lovingly showing forth His goodwill towards us! Behold how 'all things are of God!' He 'called;' He 'justified;' He 'glorified.' He 'called' you, for He sent His message of Life to you, and brought home His Word, with power to your hearts, by His Spirit. He 'justified you,' for He made you partakers of the Death of His Son. He 'glorified' you, for He made you partakers of His Life; He gave you a new life, which you possess now by virtue of the share you have in His glorious Resurrection-Life, and which is a pledge to you of yet fuller life, and brighter glory hereafter.



## CHAP. VIII. 31—39.

(31) What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who is against us? (32) He, surely, who spared not His own Son, but gave Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? (33) Who shall bring charges against God's chosen ones? It is God who justifies. (34) Who is he that condemns? It is Christ, who died, yea, rather who was also raised again, who is also on the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. (35) Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or anxiety, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (36) As it is written, 'For Thy sake we are being put to death all the day; we were counted as sheep for the slaughter.' (37) Nay, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. (38) For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, (39) nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## NOTES.

272. Thanks be unto God for this glorious Gospel, the words of which are so plain, that he who runs may read them! But note that, throughout, the Apostle is speaking of God's Love to us, not of ours to Him—of the Father's Love, that holds His fearful child to His bosom, not of the feeble clinging of the childish arm around Him. He is speaking also not merely of the Love of Christ towards us, but of the 'Love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The spirit of these words is applicable to every member of the human race. They are all under the same 'Faithful Creator,' who 'was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself,' who is the

'Saviour of all men, though in a special sense, of Christian believers,' who 'gave His Son as a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,' who 'set forth His Son as a propitiation, not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world.' But the Apostle's language is specially true of those who have received their Heavenly Father's call in the Gospel, to come, as God's chosen ones, and be consciously embraced in His Love. He has chosen and foreknown them for a most gracious purpose. He has assured them that He Himself justifies them. Who then is left to condemn them? We know that He spared not His own dear Son, but gave Him to be our Head, our Elder Brother, to take part with us in all things, that become a true Man, to live and labour, to suffer and die, with us and for us. How then should He withhold any other blessing that we may need, when He has thus so freely given us the chiefest proof of His Love, the very central essence of all blessing? He has raised Him also from the dead, and placed Him as our King, at the right hand of power, and made Him our Advocate and Intercessor. What shall separate us from His Love? These little things of earth, by which our faith and patience are daily tried, these accidents of life, which may take from us many blessings and comforts, can they take from us this, in having which we have all? Nay, in all things we are more than conquerors, we *triumph* in life, through our Father's Love. That Love is shed abroad in us, by His Spirit, in the very midst of these tribulations. They do but serve to deepen in us the assurance that He loves us, and is making all things work together for our good.

#### CHAP. IX. 1—13.

(1) I speak the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, (2) that there is great grief to me, and unceasing pain to my heart. (3) For I was wishing to be myself accursed from Christ for my brethren's sake, my kinsmen according to the flesh; (4) *men* who are Israelites, whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the service of *divine worship*, and the promises, (5) whose are the Fathers, and from whom is Christ, according to the flesh. God, who is over all, is Blessed for ever! Amen. (6) But

it is not possible that the word of God has utterly failed. For not all, who are *born* of Israel, are Israel. (7) Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are all children; but, 'in Isaac shall thy seed be called:' (8) that is to say, not the children of the flesh are children of God; but the children of the promise are to be reckoned for a seed. (9) For the word of the promise is this, 'With reference to this time I will come, and to Sara there shall be a son.' (10) And not only so, but *there was* also Rebecca, having conceived by one *man*, Isaac, our father. (11) For when they were not yet born, and had not done anything good or evil, that so the purpose of God according to choice might stand, not in consequence of works, but of Him that calleth, (12) it was said to her, 'The elder shall serve the younger;' (13) as it is written, 'Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.'

## NOTES.

273. v. 1. *I speak the truth in Christ, I lie not.* Why such strong asseveration? Because, after what he had before written, it might almost seem as if he did not care so much for his own people as a true Jew ought; moreover, his enemies, if they reached Rome, as they might do at any moment, would be sure to bring this charge against him; and, lastly, because he is about to enter more deeply into the whole question of the rejection of the Jews from their place of honour in God's Kingdom.

274. v. 3. *I was wishing to be myself accursed from Christ for my brethren's sake.* Doubtless, the Apostle meant exactly what he says in this verse. 'I was wishing,' the thought crossed my mind, the wish arose in heart, that, if I could purchase the welfare of my people, by my own utter loss, so greatly is my love to them, I would gladly be content to do so. It is the expression of an affectionate and fervent heart. We need not suppose that he sat down deliberately to calculate all the consequences of being accursed from Christ, or had them before his eye distinctly, when he uttered the wish. Probably, he referred at the moment more to the blessings he should lose than to the woe he should suffer, by using the ex-

pression, 'accursed from Christ,'—to the sacrifice of that happy confidence and bright hope and living joy, which he now had in his Master's service, and in daily communion with Him,—to the sense of darkness which would attend a state of separation from Christ,—rather than to the 'Fire' and the 'Worm,' the 'weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.' And, of course, the wish would be constantly put down by the thought that the thing was impossible. St. Paul's words, in fact, are similar to those of Moses, when he prayed (Ex. xxxii. 32) that God would 'blot out his name from the Book of the Righteous.'

275. v. 4. *the glory*. From the order of the words, this does not mean the Shechinah, which was only given *after* the 'covenants' and the 'giving of the Law,' but, rather, the glory which attached to the 'adoption,' indicated in the promises, 'Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation,'—'all the nations of the earth shall be blessed through him,'—'I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her,' &c., with many other like words addressed directly to themselves in the law. The 'covenants,' made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: the 'service' of the tabernacle, laid down minutely in the Law: the 'promises' made to the Fathers, and, throughout the Law, to the people themselves: the 'Fathers,' Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the great men of old, as Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, &c.

276. v. 5. *God, who is over all, is Blessed for ever!* These words are now, by some of the best interpreters, separated from the preceding. The Greek distinctly admits of it, and it appears to be required by the fact that the phrase 'Blessed for ever,' is never once used of Christ, in the New Testament. A Christian, with a Jewish education, would always use them of God the Father (Rom. i. 25; Mark xiv. 61; Luke i. 68; 2 Cor. i. 3; xi. 31; Eph. i. 3; 1 Pet. i. 3). In 2 Cor. xi. 31, nearly identically the same words are found as here. The Fathers, though they generally apply these words to Christ, yet unanimously agree that the expression, 'God over all,' is properly used of the Father alone. The only difficulty is to see exactly the thread of the Apostle's discourse at this point. That, after speaking of our Lord as coming of Israel, 'according to the flesh,' he should break out into speaking of Him as glorious according to the Spirit, is very natural, and just what he has done in Rom. i. 4. And, certainly, if his language admitted of it, we might conclude, with the great majority of interpreters, that this is what he is doing here. But, to my own judgment, the words do not admit of being referred to our Lord, for the reasons above given. And the connexion of St. Paul's ideas seems to be plainly this. 'I could have wished to have been accursed from Christ, for the sake of my brethren, whom God has so highly distinguished, [if

that would have availed to prevent their present rejection. But, no; it cannot be: the glory must depart from Israel: God's Holy Will be done, whether He gives or takes away! to that Will we must meekly bow]. God who is over all is blessed for ever! Amen.'

\* 277. v. 6. *but it is not possible that the word of God has utterly failed, &c.* Yet do not say that God's promises have failed in any way, though He does see good to withdraw His blessings. He never made a promise to the mere natural children of Israel or of Abraham, so as to give any man a right to claim at His hands the fulfilment of His word to Himself, simply because He has come out of Abraham's loins. On the contrary, He made choice among the children of Abraham, and limited the promised blessing to Isaac. He made choice again among the children of Isaac, born of one and the same mother, and limited it still further to Jacob. Why may He not, with the most perfect consistency, make choice among the children of Jacob, and limit the promised blessing to whom He will among them, to those who walk in the faith of Jacob, and of Isaac, and of Abraham? What word or act of His binds Him to give the Kingdom, which He has promised, to this man or to that, merely because He is a child of Abraham? On this ground Ishmael might have claimed, as well as Isaac, as being embraced in the first statement of the promise. Or, if it be said that the promise was afterwards limited to his children by Sara, then, at all events, Esau might have claimed, who was Sara's grandchild no less than Jacob, born of the same mother as Jacob, born not at another time, by another father, but by the same father, and at the very same birth. Has not the Wisdom of God in this way warned you most distinctly to put no trust in your mere fleshly descent from Abraham? Is it not set before you plainly that the Holy and Righteous God will not put out of His own hands the distribution of His blessings, that He will make choice among the sons of Jacob, as He did among the sons of Isaac and Abraham, and in every generation pour His blessing upon those who serve him, counting them, and them only, the true sons of Israel, the true seed of the faithful Abraham?

278. v. 13. *Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.* These words, of course, are merely the strong language of prophecy. We may compare them with our Lord's words, 'If any man hate not his father and mother, &c., and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.' In all the preceding words, however, and in what follows, St. Paul is not speaking at all of eternal salvation and perdition, but of the temporal privileges and blessings, by which it pleased God to distinguish some more than others, and by the proper use of which they would have gained, doubtless, a higher place in the Heavenly Kingdom, whereas, by the abuse of them, they have sunk

proportionally lower than others. As regards their state in the eternal world, Ishmael and Esau and their descendants, (among whom we may reckon the Zulus and Kafirs,) stand on the same level, and will be judged with the same righteous judgment, as others more highly favoured in this world with the means of grace and the hope of glory, as their brethren in the Jewish Church of old, or in the Christian now. All will be judged according to their works, and according to the light vouchsafed to them. With reference to the Light, which we, Christians of England, have received, it might be said, in like manner, 'England has God loved, and Africa has He hated.' Yet not all English Christians are children of the Light, nor are all African heathens children of Satan; but those, who have received most, shall have most required of them.

### CHAP. IX. 14—17.

(14) What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Nay, not so. (15) For He says to Moses, 'I will have mercy on whom I may choose to have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I may choose to have compassion.' (16) So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. (17) For says the Scripture to Pharaoh, 'For this very thing I raised thee up, that I may show forth in thee my might, and that my name may be spread abroad in all the earth.'

#### NOTES.

279. v. 14. *what shall we say then?* We have here the same question, so often repeated before in different forms. 'Is God, then, unrighteous, unjust to us, unfaithful to His word of promise, in casting off any, or, if He sees good, all the people of Israel?' Far from it, says St. Paul. Not only by those instances just quoted, but by His distinct words to Moses, He claimed for Himself the right of distributing His own favours, of judging for Himself in each individual case, according to the truth and the right. He refuses to allow to any one the right to demand at His hands, in the case of any particular person or nation, the fulfilment of a supposed irreversible decree, whether for life or death. No! God 'will have mercy where he will have mercy.'

The error of the Calvinist is in supposing that this asserts for the Almighty the power to act, by the exercise of an arbitrary prerogative, in choosing whom He will save and whom He will cast away. In point of fact, the whole tenor and object of the Apostle's words is expressly to do away with this notion of an arbitrary election. It was just that which the Jew of his day relied on. He was one of the elect. The Jews were the Calvinists of those days, and believed themselves, as God's chosen people, sure of the kingdom. St. Paul is trying, with all possible arguments, to shatter this fond notion to pieces. He says, "No! God Himself, with His own wise, and just, and unerring judgment, will pass a righteous sentence upon all, whether Jew or Greek, Christian or Heathen. He will chastise or bless, quicken or harden, as He sees it good, as He sees that the case and circumstances require. And of this, He gave the people of Israel intimation abundantly, saying to Moses of old, 'I will have mercy;' " &c.

280. v. 16. *so then it is not of him that willeth, &c.* So, then, you cannot, by willing or running, gain for yourselves a place in God's Kingdom. You must, indeed, both *will* and *run*, by the help of that Gracious Spirit, who worketh in you 'both to *will* and to *do* after God's good pleasure.' But your best work, all your willing and running, will fall infinitely short of the holy requirements of God's Law. You cannot enter His Kingdom in this way, by any supposed righteousness of your own, by any claim of desert on your part. It will be simply of 'God who showeth mercy.' You can enter only through God's free gift of grace, bestowed upon faithful souls among you, as upon faithful souls everywhere, upon Gentiles as well as Jews,—upon all who imperfectly, indeed, at the best, yet humbly and sincerely, seek to walk according to that measure of Light, which has been vouchsafed to them, to 'will' and to 'run' according to the truth which they know, to continue patiently persevering in well-doing, according to that which has been revealed to them of the way of righteousness.

281. v. 17. *For says the Scripture to Pharaoh, &c.* And do not think that your exaltation as a nation, your distinguished privileges, are any guarantee to you of such special favour as you imagine, by which you will be screened from God's anger as Jews, even though indulging those very sins, which you are able loudly to condemn in others. Your privileges, doubtless, were given to you as a sign of special favour, but not such as this. You were meant to be God's Ministers of mercy to all the ends of the earth, and while daily enjoying yourselves the blessedness of communion with the true and living God, to be employed as dispensers of His Bounty and Goodness to others. For this cause God 'raised you up' as a nation, as He once 'raised up' Pharaoh, and gave him power, and wealth, and dignity. But you have turned your blessings into a curse, as Pharaoh

did his power before you. And may not your position before God, at this very moment, as a nation, be just the same as that of Pharaoh, when it was said, 'For this very thing I raised thee up,'—not, as thou vainly thinkest, for thine own aggrandisement and glory, that thou mightest do thine own will, and work out thine own ends,—but that even, in thy obstinacy and self-will, thou mightest serve my purpose, and work out my end, being turned to my praise, and being made to bring glory to my Name? It is not meant that God created Pharaoh for this express purpose, that by his sin he might the more effectually glorify God. But, as all power is from God, and all the powers that be are ordained of God, and are 'raised up' to be ministers of God, to uphold the good and to execute wrath upon them that do evil, so are they subject to the control of Him who reigns above, and even, when like Nero, persecuting, or, like Pharaoh, stubborn and oppressive, will yet be made, in some way or other, 'ministers of God,' for His glory and our good.

The being 'raised up,' then, and distinguished from others by being endowed with special privileges, as Jews or Christians, is no sign in their case, any more than it was in Pharaoh's, or in a thousand other similar instances, that they are regarded as God's favourites, and will be exempted, as such, from His righteous judgment. As God made all the greatness, which He gave to Pharaoh, subserve, in spite of Pharaoh's obstinacy, His own All-wise and Almighty Purposes, so may He deal with the Jewish people, and make the blessings, which they have enjoyed in the past, to be, in spite of their stubbornness and unbelief, the very means which He will use for showing forth His Goodness, ay, and His Severity also, to the world. 'Do not, then,' he seems to say, 'be thinking of your privileges, as if they were grounds for any "boasting confidence" in the fact, that God has called you to be His chosen people. Remember the lesson taught you in Pharaoh's case, that, when men are headstrong and disobedient, their very greatness becomes the means of their ruin, and makes their fall the more terrible in the end.'

## CHAP. IX. 18.

(18) So then, whom He wills, He has mercy on, and whom He wills, He hardeneth.

### NOTES.

282. v. 18. Not by any mere arbitrary proceeding, but by an unerring law of righteousness, will this blessing or this judgment go forth. Where



He sees a faithful, humble soul, following the light already given, continuing patiently in well-doing, according to the grace already bestowed, there He 'wills' to pour out His Mercy, and His Hand will not be stayed, because that man is a heathen, nor hastened, because he is a Jew or a Christian. And where, on the other hand, He sees, as He alone can see, that there is a 'root of evil' within the heart, and men obey not the Law of Righteousness revealed to them, but yield themselves to unrighteousness, there He 'wills' to pour out His judgment. And what will the Mercy be? Increase of grace to those that use grace, the softening and subduing, the cleansing and purifying of the heart, while it grows in the tempers which become the children of God. And what will the judgment be? The loss of that grace already received, the hardening and deadening of the heart, which is the natural and necessary consequence of indulged evil, just as the growth in grace is the natural and necessary consequence of obedience (see note 40). 'To them, which have, it shall be given, and they shall have abundantly; but from him, that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have.'

Such is the present necessary consequence of such sin. It does not follow that there are no remedial measures, however painful, which the Wisdom and Goodness of God may bring hereafter, to bear upon the man for his recovery. The Apostle is presently going to speak of such recovery, as actually in store for the Jewish people itself, after they shall have been cast off for a time, and hardened in unbelief.

## CHAP. IX. 19—33.

(19) Thou wilt say then to me, 'Why does He still lay blame? For His wish (or *design*) who hath resisted?' (20) Nay, but O man, who art thou that answerest back to God? 'Shall the thing fashioned say to him that fashioneth, Why didst thou make (or *Why didst thou treat*) me thus?' (21) Has not the potter power over the clay, out of the same lump to make one vessel for honour, and another for dishonour? (22) What if God, willing to show forth His anger, and to make known His power, endured, with much long-suffering, vessels of wrath already fitted for destruction, (23) and that He may make known the riches of His

glory upon vessels of mercy, which He before prepared for glory?—(24) whom also He called not only from Jews, but also from Gentiles; (25) as, in fact, He says in Hosea, ‘I will call that, which is not my people, my my people, and her, which is not beloved, beloved;’ (26) ‘And it shall be, in the place where it was said to them, Ye are not my people, there shall they be called children of the living God.’ (27) Esaias too cries concerning Israel, ‘Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, *yet* the remnant *only* shall be saved. (28) For He is completing the matter, and cutting it short in righteousness; for a shortened work will the Lord make upon the earth.’ (29) And as Esaias has said before, ‘Except the Lord of Hosts had left us a seed behind, we should have become as Sodom, and we should have been made like unto Gomorrha.’ (30) What shall we say then? That Gentiles, though not pursuing after righteousness, obtained righteousness, a righteousness which is of faith; (31) whereas Israel, pursuing after a law of righteousness, did not get before into a law of righteousness. (32) Why? Because they pursued after *a righteousness*, not as of faith, but as of works of law. (33) For they stumbled at the stone of stumbling, as it is written, ‘Behold, I lay in Sion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of tripping; and every one, who believeth in Him, shall not be confounded.’

## NOTES.

283. v. 19. *Thou wilt say then to me, ‘Why does He still lay blame?’* It is plain that St. Paul is here referring back again to the same kind of arguments, on the part of the Jewish mind, as he had already silenced in chap. iii. He has just asked (ix. 14), ‘What shall we say then? Is there any unrighteousness with God?’—a question precisely parallel to that in iii. 5, ‘Is

God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance?' And now he repeats, in another form, the question which followed this in iii. 7, namely, 'Well, but if the truth of God, through my falsehood, abounded to His glory, why am I after all to be still judged as a sinner?' Here he says, 'Thou wilt say to me, "Why does He after all find fault? for who hath resisted His purpose?" that is, if all my proceedings have only helped towards the accomplishment of His designs, why, then, am I to be blamed?' To the question, as it stood in iii. 7, he gave no direct reply, but broke off into an indignant denunciation of the gross immorality involved in such an argument. To the present question, also, he gives no direct reply, but breaks off into the impiety of a creature arraigning in this way the acts of the all-wise and good Creator.

284. v. 20. *shall the thing fashioned, &c.* "As Isaiah said long ago, 'Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, what makest thou?' [Note that the reference throughout is to clay, still soft under the potter's hand, which can be moulded afresh, not to that which has been baked, and hardened into a fixed form.] As he has said again, 'We are but the clay, and Thou our Potter, and we are all the work of Thy Hand.' May not the Heavenly Potter deal with the Jewish nation, as He sees fit, fashioning it first, if He sees good, into the shape of a vessel designed for high and honourable use in His service, and then, if He sees that the vessel is marred in the making, and will not answer His purpose, unmaking it again with a stroke of His Hand, and out of the selfsame lump making another vessel, for dishonour, for some lower use, which shall answer His purpose still, and be used in His service, though in another less honourable way?"

That the above is the true meaning of the passage, and that St. Paul is not arguing (as the mere words of the Greek and English would allow us to suppose), that the Potter has power to make out of the same lump, *at the same time*, two vessels, at his own arbitrary will, one for honour, and the other for dishonour (so as to support the Calvinistic view), will be plain, if we turn to the passage in Jeremiah, to which he is evidently referring (Jer. xviii. 3—6), 'I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he *made it again another vessel*, as seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, O House of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in Mine Hand, O House of Israel.' So, then, the Great Potter, when a vessel is marred in His Hand in the making, when He sees that a people, or a Church, or an individual, will not answer to the end for which He fashioned it, will make it into another vessel for His use, as it seemeth good to Him

to make it. He will not cast it away, but refashion it, to serve for a lower and less honourable use in His Kingdom. 'And so,' says the Apostle, 'may it now be with you. You were fashioned, indeed, to be a vessel unto honour; Israel was to be the Light, and Jerusalem the joy, of the whole earth. But the Potter may see that you have become marred in His Hand in the making. He may even now be fashioning you into another vessel, a vessel still for His own use, but for a lower purpose, that, even by the loss of those high privileges which you have hitherto enjoyed, by being deprived of that Glory for which He designed you, and portions of which have already been vouchsafed to you, you may serve His great ends, as a witness and a warning to others, until the time of mercy shall come again for you, and the clay be once more taken into the Potter's Hand, and fashioned anew at His Will.'

285. v. 22. *what if God, willing to show forth His anger, &c.* 'What then, if it should really be true that, during all these many years, when you have been priding yourselves, in your own security, upon your rights as children of Abraham, God, meaning in due time to show His displeasure at your sins, and make known His power to deal with you as to Him seems best, has only been "enduring" you with much long-suffering, when in reality you were vessels already fitted, not by His Hand, but by the innumerable flaws and imperfections, which your own iniquities have caused, and which the Great Potter has noted in you, to be destroyed, done away with, crushed up in His Hand, and refashioned into some other form?'

286. v. 23. *and that He may make known, &c.* And so that He may make known, at the same time, the riches of His mercy also, upon vessels of mercy, whom He before prepared for glory,—prepared them in His own wise way 'beforehand,' before He broke up the Jewish vessel,—for 'glory,' for a service more glorious and 'honourable' even than that service of 'honour,' for which the Jewish vessel had been originally intended; and whom He called,—us, I mean, not 'only from among the Jews, but also from the Gentiles;' as, in fact, He has all along intimated His intention of doing, however blind you may have been to His purpose, and deaf to the teaching of your own prophets. Thus Hosea, &c.

St. Paul here quotes the words of Hosea (ii. 23) as expressing what he wishes to say, though the *Prophet* is speaking of the ten tribes, whereas the *Apostle* uses the word as applicable to the Gentiles.

287. v. 27. *Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, &c.* From this passage you might have learned that not the whole mass of the people of Israel, merely because they are Israelites, will inherit the Kingdom. 'A remnant only shall be saved.'

288. v. 29. *as Esaias has said before, &c.* Speaking of the people of

his time, the prophet said, 'Except the Lord of Hosts had left us a righteous seed, a small number, the true and faithful few, the "ten righteous," the "seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal," in whom the life of God was still maintained, we should have been like Sodom and Gomorrah.' May it not be so now? and the present season of calm be but the stillness preceding the doom of wrath, which the sins of the Jewish nation have deserved?

289. v. 30. *What shall we say then?* 'Why, we must allow that Gentiles, though not claiming to be righteous before God, though not aiming at obtaining such a righteousness, have yet had it freely bestowed upon them through God's grace in the Gospel; whereas Israel, aiming at a law or rule of righteousness, thinking to make sure of righteousness, by a kind of law or rule, a methodical process of *working*, and to acquire, as it were, a patent right to be considered as righteous before God, by taking up their freedom as natural sons of Abraham, and submitting to the necessary Mosaic ordinances, have not "got before" the Gentiles, into any such law.'

290. v. 32. *why, because they pursued, &c.* They might have found a law or rule of righteousness, indeed, a process by which righteousness may be surely obtained; but that is the very 'law of faith,' under which (iii. 27) all boasting is 'excluded.'

## CHAP. X. 1—3.

(1) Brethren, the wish of my heart, and my supplication before God, on behalf of Israel, is for salvation. (2) For I bear witness to them that they have a zeal for God, but not according to clear knowledge. (3) For, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.

## NOTES.

291. v. 1. *for salvation.* St. Paul distinguishes between *justification* and *salvation*, between a man's being *justified* and being *saved*. He is justified freely by the gift of righteousness, which God bestows upon all men generally, and reveals for their comfort and joy to all believers. And this righteousness He gives us in His Son, and ratified the assurance of it, that we were made righteous and reconciled, when He raised Him from the dead. This is what St. Paul calls (Rom. v. 2) '*having access into this state*

of grace in which we stand.' But a man, being thus justified, needs now to be 'saved' by the life of Jesus from the 'wrath to come,' from that 'wrath' (Rom. v. 9) which his daily sins deserve.

Through Him, and His Presence at the right hand of God, where, by God's own gracious appointment, He stands our Head and Lord, and Elder Brother, ever making intercession for us, we trust to be 'saved from that wrath,' for the sins which we confess before God, and turn from with true repentance. Even if our Father sees that we still need to be chastened for them, yet it will not be in 'wrath' and severe displeasure, if He sees a broken heart and contrite spirit. The Apostle then says here that he earnestly desires and prays that Israel may be 'saved' from the Divine displeasure. He does not doubt of their being *justified* by God's grace as other men; but he fears that heavy judgments are coming upon them, as upon children, from a Father's Hand, for their manifold sins.

292. v. 2. *not according to clear knowledge*, that is, of God's gracious Will and Purpose, in calling them first of the whole human race, into special nearness of relationship to Himself. They turned this grace of God into a ground for their own self-exaltation, instead of regarding it as a declaration of His Favour to them, indeed, at first, but through them to all mankind.

293. v. 3. *being ignorant of God's righteousness*, that is, of the righteousness of which the Apostle has been speaking all along, which God bestows freely on all, who will humbly trust in His Love and will be content to be righteous in His Sight, not for any worthiness of their own, or any peculiar claim they may fancy themselves to have upon His Favour, but simply because He is graciously pleased to call them righteous, to account them as righteous creatures, for the sake of His own dear Son, whom He has given to be their Head and King.

294. v. 3. *seeking to establish their own righteousness, &c.* They have sought a righteousness which they may call their own, and boast in, which they can make sure for themselves, independently of God's Justice and Mercy. Hence, they have not 'submitted themselves,' become subject, obedient (see note 194) unto God's Righteousness; they have not been willing humbly to receive by faith God's gracious gift to all mankind, and welcome its law of love as the law of their lives.

#### CHAP. X. 4—10.

(4) For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth. (5) For Moses writes of the righteousness which is of the law, that 'the man,

who does these things, shall live in them.' (6) But the righteousness, which is of faith, says thus, 'Say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend up into Heaven?'—that is, to bring down Christ, (7) 'or, Who shall descend into the deep,'—that is, to bring back Christ from the dead. (8) But what saith it? 'Near thee is the word, in thy mouth, and in thy heart,' that is, the word of faith, which we preach, (9) that, if thou confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in thy heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (10) For with the heart it is to be believed unto righteousness; but with the mouth it is to be confessed unto salvation.

## NOTES.

295. v. 4. *for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, &c.* Yet, if the Jews had known God's Righteousness, if they were not ignorant of the whole spirit of their own Law, they would see that, even there, Christ is preached throughout, God's righteousness through Christ is the end, to which the whole Law is pointing and tending,—God's righteousness bestowed, not as the reward of works, but as a free gift of His Love, which we have only to believe in, and live,—God's righteousness, bestowed not on the Jew only, but on 'every one that believeth.'

296. v. 5. *for Moses writes, &c.* Moses, indeed, does write of the righteousness which comes by the Law, the righteousness which comes through the works, as follows, 'The man who 'does these things, shall live in them.' And if a man *could* 'do these things,' and do them faithfully and perfectly, *could* work all righteousness, no doubt he would 'live in them.' But God and our own hearts know that we cannot do so, that we are all fallen and sinful creatures at the best, that, left to this rule, we must die. And, therefore, He Himself vouchsafes to give us life through Him, the One Man, who did 'do those things,' those righteous requirements of the Law, and 'lived in them.'

297. v. 6. *but the righteousness which is of faith, says thus.* Hence the same Moses, who wrote as above, describing the righteousness which is by works, wrote also, in God's Name, other words such as these, which set forth the grace of God, the righteousness which is by faith. 'Say not,' &c. (Deut. xxx. 11—14.)

'See!' says the Apostle, 'words like these show that it is no great and impossible thing which God requires of His creatures, in order that they may enter into life, as if they had to work out their own righteousness and salvation, amidst all their infirmity and ignorance, their sense of utter helplessness. Moses speaks not of any great work to be done by them, as if they had to go up to Heaven, to bring Christ down, or to go down to the deep, to bring Christ up from the dead. *They* have not to bring about these mighty wonders. God's Love has wrought these signs of His Grace for us. He speaks not of any thing peculiar to the Jew above other men, or to one man above another, but of something simple and common, within the reach and compass of all, of something near and close to every man, of a word very nigh, in the heart and in the mouth, that he should do it,—just such a word of faith as that which we now preach, a word of mere faith and trust in God's Mercy and Love.'

298. v. 9. *if thou confess, &c.* And the word of faith is this, that if thou, O man, whoever thou art, wilt 'confess with thy mouth,' that is, wilt confess outwardly before men, with thy lips and in thy life, that Jesus is Lord, and wilt 'believe inwardly in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.' The full meaning of this statement will appear more plainly in the next note.

299. v. 10. *for with the heart it is to be believed unto righteousness; but with the mouth it is to be confessed unto salvation.* If we believe in our hearts that God raised our blessed Lord from the dead, then we are sure that He accepts Him as our Head and Elder Brother, and us in Him; we are certified by that fact that God justifies us, makes us righteous, calls us near unto Himself, allows us a gracious 'access' to His Presence, as our reconciled, or, rather, reconciling Father and Friend. But, being thus justified of God's free grace, we must seek to walk worthy of our high calling; we must confess Jesus Christ in all our daily thoughts, and words, and actions, as our Lord, ever seeking to bring forth, as His servants, the fruits of holiness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. And, though our lives will still be full of frailty and imperfection at the best, though still we must have daily to confess and mourn before God many things which we have done wrong or left undone, yet, thus seeking to confess our Heavenly Master with sincerity and singleness of heart, we shall be 'saved' from wrath through Him; even, if needing to be chastened by our Father's rod, we shall be 'saved' from the visitations of His angry displeasure.



## CHAP. X. 11—21.

(11) For the Scripture saith, 'Every one, that believeth in Him, shall not be confounded.' (12) For there is no difference both of Jew and Greek; for the same is Lord of all, rich unto all that call upon Him. (13) For 'every one, who shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved.' (14) How then shall they call on Him, in whom they believed not? and how shall they believe in Him, of whom they heard not? And how shall they hear without a preacher? (15) And how shall they preach unless they be sent? as it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those, who bring the message of peace, who bring the gospel of good things!' (16) But not all obeyed the gospel (*who heard of it*); for Esaias says, 'Lord, who believed our report?' (17) So then faith does come by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (18) But I say, 'Have they not heard?' Yea, verily, 'into all the earth hath gone out their voice, and unto the ends of the world their words.' (19) But I say, 'Did not Israel know?' First Moses says, 'I will excite you with what is no nation, with a simple nation will I anger you.' (20) But Esaias speaks boldly out, and says, 'I was found by those not seeking me, I became manifest to those not enquiring after me.' (21) But to Israel he says, 'All the day I stretched out my hands towards a people disobedient and contradictory.'

## NOTES.

800. v. 11. *for the Scripture saith, Every one, &c.* 'I say, these words, though addressed, in the first instance, to Jews, have nothing in them

which confines their meaning to Jews. They are true of thee, O man, whosoever thou art. Thy God requires of thee no impossible thing, but simply to believe in His Fatherly Love, and yield thyself up to the gracious leading of His Holy Spirit. The word is very near thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart. For what says the Scripture, '*Every one that believeth in Him shall not be confounded...For there is no difference...But the same Lord is over all, rich unto all that call upon Him.*'

301. v. 14. *How then shall they call on Him, &c.* But it may be said, this language of the prophet assumes that men shall first have heard of Him, in whom they are to trust, on whom they are to call. And how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall there be preachers, unless God sends them? &c., as Isaiah wrote. And it may be argued, perhaps, that because the Gentiles have had no preachers sent to them, as the Jews have had, therefore they cannot be included in such promises; for they cannot have heard of God, they cannot have believed in Him, they cannot have called upon His Name. Such words as these, then, it may be said, belong only to us, Jews, whom God has specially distinguished from all other of the sons of men, by sending His prophets and vouchsafing His favour to them.

302. v. 16. *but not all obeyed the gospel*, that is, even in that case, to which these words of the Prophet refer, all did not obey the Gospel, though they heard it. In other words, the Apostle, in reply to the supposed objection, says, 'It does not follow, because the heathen do not generally do the Will of God, that they have never heard anything about it. You argue this from what you see in their lives. You take for granted that they have never heard any words of life from the Mouth of God, because you see, what every one sees, that their lives generally are impure and unholy. But has all Israel obeyed the Gospel, the Message of Life and Love, which God sent them of old by His Messengers? You know well they have not. And, if you were even ready to deny this, Isaiah himself would tell us, for he cries, "Who hath believed our report?" You might as well, then, argue that the people of Israel have never had Light from God's Holy Place vouchsafed to them, because His Holy Name is so often "blasphemed through them among the heathen," as infer that the heathen have never "heard," because the great mass of them seem not to have "believed" and "obeyed" the word of God.'

303. v. 17. *So then faith does come by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* 'So, then, I am quite ready to say with you, men cannot believe in God, except by hearing, in some way or other, and they cannot hear, except God speaks to them.'

304. v. 18. *But I say, Have they not heard, &c.* "But, I say, has He

not spoken to them, and have they not heard, and have not some among them believed and obeyed, though the great body of them may, perhaps, be as unbelieving and disobedient as the great body of the Jewish people, both of old and now? Have they, indeed, been left alone in the world by their 'Faithful Creator,' uncared for, and utterly untaught, and unenlightened? Have they not had 'preachers' all along, to tell them of God's Majesty and Goodness, to declare to them in some measure the 'invisible things' of their Father in Heaven? Has not that, 'which is knowable of God,' been 'manifested among them, for God has showed it unto them, even His Eternal Power and Godhead'? Do not the very Heavens declare the glory of God? Has not 'their voice,' the voice of God's great company of preachers, 'gone out into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world'? Has God left any of His rational creatures without some intelligible signs of His Presence, some intimations of His righteous Will,—on the one hand revealing His wrath against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who keep back the truth which they know by their iniquity,—on the other hand, declaring His Fatherly Love towards them, 'giving them rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness,' showing that 'He is not far from any one of them, in whom they live and move and have their being'?"

And are we so sure that none among the heathen have called upon the Lord in sincerity and truth, according to the light vouchsafed to them, though they did not know Him as Jehovah, the Living God, or as the Father of our Lord? Has there been no Job, or Melchizedek, or Jethro, or Cornelius,—no Socrates, who could die a glorious martyr to the truth,—no Cicero, who could stretch out his neck to the murderer's stroke, after a life spent faithfully and zealously, though amidst much infirmity of body and mind, in the service of his country,—no Nebuchadnezzar, who, after chastisement, could 'bless the Most High, and praise and honour Him that liveth for ever,' (Dan. iv. 34),—no King of Nineveh, who with his people could cry mightily unto God in the time of his distress, and 'God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way'? Yes, most assuredly. From the beginning of the world it always has been, and is, and ever will be, true, that 'in every nation, he, that feareth God and worketh righteousness,' according to the light vouchsafed to him, though he may not be circumcised as a Jew, nor baptized as a Christian, 'is accepted of Him,' who is the Faithful Creator, the Merciful God, and the loving Friend and Father of all.

305. v. 19. *but I say, Did not Israel know?* "And is all this, I repeat again, news to the Jews? Have they had no intimation given them, that the Gentiles were meant to share in the Mercies of their God, as well as

themselves? Did not Israel know this, or might they not have known it, all along? What says Moses himself? And what says Isaiah, still more plainly and boldly? Do they not tell you of the 'no-nation,' the 'simple nation,' that is, the Gentiles, by whom God will be found, though they 'seek Him not,' and 'enquire not after Him,' and upon whom He will pour out His blessing, and so provoke and anger you, His disobedient people?"

### CHAP. XI. 1—6.

(1) I say then, 'Did God cast off His people?' Nay, not so: for I too am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. (2) God cast not off His people, whom He foreknew. Know ye not what the Scripture saith in *the story of Elias*, how he pleads with God against Israel, saying, (3) 'Lord, Thy prophets they killed, and Thine altars they dug down; and I was left behind alone, and they seek my life.' (4) But what says the Divine utterance to him? 'I left to myself seven thousand men, such as bowed not the knee to Baal.' (5) So then in the present time also there is a remnant according to election of grace. (6) But if by grace, *it is* no longer of works; since *then* grace becomes no longer grace. But if of works, no longer is it grace; since *then* work no longer is work.

#### NOTES.

806. v. 1. *did God cast off His people*, that is, when He saw such fault in them, when he spoke so severely of them, and even dealt so severely with them? God forbid! How could I bear to say or imagine such a thing of my own people, my own kith and kin? No! He may chastise severely, and, if need be, for a time cut off from the enjoyment of His favour, those whom He once foreknew for better things. But he will not cast them off.

807. v. 2. *God cast not off His people, whom He foreknew*, that is, whom He fixed upon beforehand, for a gracious purpose (see note 270). And in fact, there was always left a righteous seed, a seed of life among

them. And this of itself was a proof that God had not cast them off, nor utterly withdrawn His loving-kindness from them.

308. v. 5. *so then in the present time also there is a remnant according to election of grace.* As one might have thought in the days of old, as Elias did think, that the whole nation was apostate, and yet there were seven thousand true and faithful souls to be found in Israel, unknown to the prophet, but marked of Him who 'searcheth the hearts, and trieth the reins of the children of men, so now, though the great mass of the Jewish people is self-willed, and obstinately fixed in unbelief, yet, doubtless, there are many among them, whether the Gospel Message has reached them as yet or not, whom the Eye of their Lord approves in their daily lives of piety and faithfulness, and on whom the blessing of their God descends.

And the words may be extended to have a wider meaning than this. 'The Lord knoweth them that are His,' in every age, in every nation under heaven. He knoweth those, who, according to the Light vouchsafed to them, 'do justice, and love mercy, and walk humbly with their God.' He knows such as these; and He 'elects,' He chooses them, for His own dear children, from among the mass of human-kind. To them He will grant His peace, the Peace which passes understanding, and reveal more fully the secrets of His Love.

We know not how many there are of these in any age. There were in that day, and, probably, there will be at all times, compared with the great mass of any nation or mankind at large, but a few only of those, who enter by the 'strait gate,' and pass on by the 'narrow way' that leadeth unto life,—a 'remnant, according to election of grace.' These are approved and elected of God's free grace, not for any worthiness of their own, which has deserved it,—not for any works which they have wrought with the strength He gave them. He knows, and they know also, that they have but feebly used that strength and grace He gave them,—that their best works fall utterly short of that perfection, which the Law of Holiness requires,—that, in themselves, they are 'unworthy and unclean, unfit to stand before Him,' unable to bear the scrutiny of His Pure Eyes. But, as He blessed Abraham, and called him righteous, though in himself unrighteous, 'forgiving his unrighteousness and covering his sin,' not as one *obliged* to do it, not as if Abraham had a right to *claim* it at His hands, but as an act of free grace, so are all those, whom God sees in any nation, to be 'working good' and 'patiently continuing in well-doing,' approved and 'elected' by Him, to enjoy the richer blessings of His favour, not for their righteousness' sake, but through His free Grace and infinite Mercy. There is not a word in all this to countenance the Calvinistic notion, of the Al-

mighty 'elected,' by an arbitrary fiat of His Will, a few only, a 'remnant,' of the human race for life, and consigning the rest to endless misery.

### CHAP. XI. 7—27.

(7) What then? What Israel seeks after, that it attained not, but the election attained it; whereas the rest were hardened, (8) as it is written, 'God gave them a spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this very day.' (9) And David says, 'Let their table become a stumbling-block and a recompense to them. (10) Let their eyes be darkened, that they should not see, and ever bow thou down their back.' (11) I say then, 'Did they stumble, so as to fall?' Nay, not so: but through their lapse *there is* salvation to the Gentiles, so as to excite them. (12) But, if their lapse is the world's wealth, and their impoverishment the Gentiles' wealth, how much more their enrichment! (13) For I speak to you, Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I glorify my ministry, (14) if I may somehow excite my flesh, and save some of them. (15) For if the casting away of them be the reconciliation of the world, what then the reception, but life from the dead? (16) But, if the first fruits be holy, so is the lump; and if the root be holy, so are the branches. (17) But, if some of the branches were broken out, whereas thou, wild-olive as thou art, wert grafted in among them, and became partaker of the root and fatness of the olive, (18) boast not against the branches; but, if thou boastest, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. (19) Thou wilt say then, 'The branches were broken out, so that I may be grafted in.' (20) Well! through

unbelief they were broken out, whereas thou by faith standest. Be not high-minded, but fear. (21) For, if God spared not the natural branches, beware lest He spare not thee either. (22) Behold, then, the goodness and severity of God,—upon them which fell, severity, but upon thee goodness, if thou continue in the goodness; since (otherwise) thou also shalt be cut off. (23) And they too, if they do not continue in unbelief, shall be grafted in; for God is able to graff them in again. (24) For, if thou wert cut out of the naturally wild olive, and unnaturally wert grafted into the good olive, how much rather shall these, the natural *branches*, be grafted into their own olive? (25) For I wish you not to be ignorant, brethren, of this mystery, so that ye may not be wise in your own conceits, that hardness in a measure is come to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles shall have come in. (26) And so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, ‘There shall come from Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away impieties from Jacob. (27) And this is my covenant with them, when I shall have taken away their sins.’

## NOTES.

309. v. 7. *what Israel seeks after, that it attained not, but the election attained it.* That righteousness, which Israel is now seeking after, in its own way, upon its own footing, by way of claim, in right of works, the nation at large, the great body of the race, did not attain. But the faithful few, the approved and elected ones, did attain it; they sought it not by works, but thankfully embraced it, as the free gift of God's grace, saying in their hearts, with the Psalmist, ‘Blessed is the man, whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sin is covered.’

310. v. 7. *the rest were hardened*, the natural consequence of their obstinacy, by the Eternal Laws, which God maintains in His Kingdom, which are the necessary Laws of the Moral World; so that we may say,

either they hardened themselves by their wickedness, or they were hardened by the judgment of God, they became hardened under the operation of God's Eternal Laws (see note 40).

311. v. 9. *and David says, &c.* It has come upon them, as upon those of whom David writes, that their 'table,'—the very goodness with which their cup overflows, the very blessings and privileges which they have enjoyed,—has become 'a snare' to them. They have become proud and high-minded, and boasting of their security: and their fall will be, in consequence, more marked and terrible.

312. v. 11. *did they stumble.* The Apostle refers to the time, when the nation finally rejected the grace of God, and the 'things of its peace' were, therefore, 'hid from its eyes.'

313. v. 11. *did they stumble, so as to fall?* that is, so as to fall *only*, never to rise again,—to lie utterly prostrate, without any prospect or hope of recovery? Not so. They have stumbled, indeed, and fallen, and lost the place, which they once enjoyed in God's favour. But this was needful, in God's great mercy, to chasten them, and rouse them, it may be, from their state of torpor. And God will use this very season of their lapse and impoverishment, as a time of blessing for the Gentiles; and He would have them stirred by this to a godly rivalry; that so they may rise again from their fall, and the whole Church be enriched by their enrichment.

314. v. 13. *I speak to you, Gentiles,*—that is, to you, believers from among the Jewish proselytes at Rome. (See Introduction.) The Jew, my own countryman and kinsman after the flesh, may not appropriate what I say: but you, I trust, at all events, will do so. Nay, I glorify and make the most of this ministry to the Gentiles, which is committed to my trust. I put it forward prominently, and draw attention to it, if I may thus stir up to rivalry those of my own flesh and blood (the Jews), and save some of them.

315. v. 15. *reconciliation.* This is the very same word which is used in verse 11, 'by whom we have now received the *at-one-ment*.' It will be at once evident how far from the Apostle's meaning is the interpretation usually given to these last words, which assumes that St. Paul is there speaking of Christ's 'atoning for' our sins, by bearing some dreadful weight of vengeance in our stead, if we translate the words now before us thus, 'If the casting away of them be the atonement of the world.'

316. v. 15. *life from the dead*, that is, like the joy of receiving back a dear friend from the embrace of death.

317. v. 16. *if the firstfruits be holy, &c.* If the fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whom God called, and set apart for Himself, be His, so, too, is the mass, the whole race, who were called and set apart in them;



and if the root, (the fathers, as before,) be holy, so too are the branches, that is, the whole tree. This does not prevent, however, some of the branches being cut out, if they bear no fruit, and other branches from the wild olive being grafted in, and made to share the richness of the true olive, the blessings enjoyed by God's chosen inner family of sons and daughters.

318. v. 19. *so that*, not 'in order that,' but merely 'to the effect that.' The Apostle's words may be paraphrased thus: 'Well!' you may say, 'however this may be, about the root bearing us, instead of our bearing the root, yet, at all events, the root *does* bear us now: they were broken out, for whatever cause, and the result is, that we are were grafted in.' 'True,' says the Apostle, 'and now you must lay to heart the same lesson, as they have had to learn, not to be high-minded, trusting in yourselves, as if you had any merit of your own, which deserved your new position, or could maintain you in it for a moment; but fear, remembering ever that "the Lord's delight is in them that fear Him, and put their whole trust in His mercy."'

319. v. 22. *if thou continus in the goodness*, if thou continue patiently in well-doing, and so abide in the goodness of God, 'keeping yourselves in His Love.'

320. v. 22. *since thou also shalt be cut off*. This is the thought you should have, while considering what has happened in their case,—not 'they were cut out, in order that I may be grafted in,' but—'they were cut out, and in their room I was grafted in; but I may be cut out also, if I prove unfaithful as they.'

321. v. 23. *and they too, if they do not continus in unbelief, shall be grafted in*. The analogy of the tree, which the Apostle has used, must not be carried too far, beyond the use for which he himself employs it. In ordinary pruning, branches 'cut out' are left to perish, are regarded as useless, as so much fuel for the fire. But here St. Paul speaks of those very same branches being 'grafted in again,' if they abide not in unbelief; for 'God is able to graff them in again,' however dry and withered they may have become, or, even, if they have been, perchance, already burnt in the fire. In other words, God will still regard them as His children, even in His severest chastisements. In cutting them off, He will not cast them away. They are still beloved, for the fathers' sakes: 'for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.'

322. v. 25: *mystery*. This word is never used in the New-Testament in the ordinary sense of something dark, obscure, hidden up, but always of something that has been hidden, and is still, perhaps, hidden from the many, but is made known and revealed to the initiated.

323. v. 26. *and so all Israel shall be saved.* This passage does not seem to be meant as an authoritative prophecy, but rather as a statement of what the Apostle's own reflecting mind saw, as it were, disclosed to him, as the explanation of God's past and present dealings, which he believed the Divine Spirit had enabled him to see, and which he wished to communicate to others. It may be that here, also, as, certainly, in his expectation of the speedy manifestation of the Second Advent, St. Paul imagines that the fulness of the Gentiles would be gathered into the Church, and the Gospel be preached among all nations, *in his own day*, and so the Deliverer would come, and iniquity be turned away from Jacob, by the Jews, as a nation, embracing the Gospel, and all Israel, the whole believing Family, whether originally Jews or Heathens, 'be saved' from the wrath revealed against all wilful sin and disobedience.

324. v. 27. *this is my covenant with them.* St. Paul does not go on to quote the words which declare what the gracious covenant is. 'This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.' (Isaiah lix. 21.)

## CHAP. XI. 28—32.

(28) As regards the Gospel, they are enemies with reference to you; but, as regards the election, they are beloved with reference to the fathers. (29) For the free gifts and the calling of God are not repented of. (30) For, just as you once disobeyed God, but now were dealt with mercifully, through their disobedience; (31) so these also now disobeyed through your mercy, so that they too may be dealt with mercifully. (32) For God shut them all up together into disobedience, so that He may deal mercifully with them all.

### NOTES.

325. v. 28. *as regards the Gospel, they are enemies with reference to you.* As concerning the Gospel, they are enemies, are treated as enemies, with a view to you,—not 'through you,' 'on your account,' (which the Greek will not allow,) as if this was *the* reason for their being so treated,

—but with a view to you, that good may result to you through their being so treated, as the Wisdom and Love of God saw good to treat them.

326. v. 28. *as regards the election, they are beloved with reference to the fathers.* But, though treated as enemies, and cut off for a season, from the enjoyment of His nearer Presence, they are not regarded by Him as enemies even now. Nay, as regards the election,—as regards God's choosing them of His own free grace to be the objects of His Mercy and Favour,—they are beloved as children still, with reference to the fathers,—not 'through' the fathers, on their account, as if that were the sole reason for God's mercy to them, but with a view to them, that blessing may result to the fathers also, from the mercies shown to the children.

How wonderfully this statement of the Apostle meets some of the deepest wants of the human spirit! What soothing comfort it brings to loving parents and dear friends, mourning under strokes of sad bereavement, when they cannot feel assured, as they would wish to be, of the state of mind of those whom they have lost, by reminding them that, besides the general Fatherly Love of God, in which they may trust for the departed, and which embraces all mankind, there are sweet words of special consolation for them, *believing*, friends. These Jews, though so wicked in themselves, unbelieving and disobedient, and so chastened and for a time cut off, as enemies, are yet beloved for their fathers' sake, with reference to them, that they, the fathers, may not be grieved and dishonoured. And shall not the child of Christian parents, though he may need many stripes, be beloved for the parents' sake? Shall not the thousand tender ties, which bind us to one another in family, and social, ay, and in human relations, be held by us as pledges of hope, which God Himself our Father has given us, to keep us ever longing, praying, and labouring, in faith and trust for one another? Can we suppose that the mere word of promise, made outwardly to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, shall make all the difference between the case of a Jewish child, and the child of any other parents, Christian or Heathen? Shall we not rather joyfully remember that the promises, made to Abraham, spoke of One greater than Abraham, who should spring from his loins, 'in whom all families of the earth should be blessed'? Surely, He, who Himself sanctified all human relationships, by taking part with us, in our nature, as Man, has taught us how to read clearly their blessed meaning, and to know that, when a woman can forget her sucking child, or a true, loving father, though broken-hearted, cast off from his affections his prodigal son, then the Lord our God, from Whom those tender human feelings came, as faint shadowings forth to us of His Love, will cast off utterly any one of His creatures, into whom He has breathed one breath of His Spirit, and by that gracious act has called him His child.

327. v. 29. *the free gifts and calling of God are not repented of.* God, having once granted gifts of free grace, having once in His mercy called, never 'changes His mind,' so as to recal His Love from the object, on which He has been pleased to bestow it. This is, undoubtedly, what the Apostle means to say. And, if the words seem, at first sight, to contradict other words in the Bible, and other facts in the Scripture history, we must seek for the truth which underlies the whole, and connects all together, as different branches of the same root. The root is the Fatherly Love of God to His creatures, which leads Him at one time to bless His children, at another to chasten them, at one moment to reveal to them the signs of His Favour, at another to cut them off for a time in displeasure, to banish them, it may be, into the outer darkness, and yet suffers Him never to forget them, or cast them off altogether.

Will it be said that the Apostle is referring only to the Jews, and to the 'gifts and calling' they had received? But the argument equally holds good of all. And, unless we deny that other men have received any 'gifts of grace,' have been 'called,' in any sense, to know the truth, though they may have kept it back in unrighteousness, we must admit that this general assertion of the Apostle holds good of them also. And, in fact, the very same reasoning, which the Apostle uses, to satisfy his own mind with respect to Israel, arguing that it was certainly not cast off altogether in the days of Elias, because there was still left a righteous seed in it, may be used in the case of any man, where there is still a seed of life remaining,—a precious remnant left, which still clings to righteousness,—seven thousand, seven hundred, seventy, or seven, or even one single thought or movement of the heart, which has not bowed the knee to Baal. God has not cast away altogether any such child, whom He foreknew for a great and blessed hope. He may need severe correction and chastisement,—to be cut off for a while from all enjoyment of God's Presence,—to be banished from the cheerful Light of day,—to be excluded from the Feast, and cast into the outer Darkness,—to be burnt up with the Fiery sense of God's Displeasure, and devoured with the undying Worm of a guilty conscience,—until the work shall be done effectually, and the evil, long indulged, purged out, and the corruption of the flesh, which clings to his spiritual nature, be wholly consumed. But while there is yet one spark of spiritual life, manifesting itself in the heart and actions of that child, though it be the poor harlot in the street, or the felon in his cell, there is a sign that the Father of Spirits has not yet forsaken the creature He has made,—that for her and him also, individually, as well as for the Jewish people, corporately, the words of the Apostle are true, 'The gifts and calling of God are not repented of.'

This is very different from saying that all men, be they never so ungodly, shall at length be saved, 'when they have suffered pain for their sins a certain time, appointed by God's justice,'—a proposition that was very rightly condemned, as a dangerous opinion, in the first draft of the Articles of the Church of England. It is 'dangerous,' assuredly, to mete out punishment of any kind, temporal or never-ending, as an equivalent appointed by God's Justice for sin, as if sin could be compared by the Divine Law with pain, and measured out exactly, with a due proportion of it, or, as if all sin, which needs punishment at all, is equally to be visited with a never-ending judgment of unutterable woe. It is true, that human laws, which aim more at prevention of crime, than amendment of the offender, do mete out in this way, beforehand, a certain measure of punishment for a certain offence. The man, who covets his neighbour's property, may, if he like, obtain it dishonestly, at a certain definite expense. He knows he may possibly escape altogether; or, at the worst, he can only suffer this or that pre-arranged penalty, after suffering which he may remain, (so far as the effect of the punishment itself is concerned, and unless other influences act upon him,) as bad and as base a villain as before. But God's punishments are those of a Father. And, as a true, loving, earthly parent will never think of weighing out, by fixed laws, a certain definite measure of punishment, as the proper amount of penalty, in case his child commits such and such an offence, but will punish him with more or less severity, as he judges to be needful in each particular case, ever seeking, not merely to check the like fault in others of his children, but to amend or correct what is evil in the offender himself—sometimes, indeed, remitting punishment altogether, as a *King*, in the exercise of his fatherly prerogative, may do, but not a *Judge*,—even so will our gracious Father in Heaven not cease to punish, in this world or the next, if He sees it to be needful. We have no ground to suppose that a wicked man will at length be released from the pit of woe, when he has suffered pain enough for his sins, when he has suffered time enough, a 'certain time appointed by God's Justice.' But we have ground to trust and believe that a man, in whose heart there is still Divine Life, in whom there lingers still one single spark of better feeling, the gift of God's Spirit, the token of a Father's still-continuing Love, will at length be saved, not from suffering, but from sin, when he has suffered sufficiently, according to the wonderful provision of God's Love,—when a Father's Hand has dealt with him sufficiently to purge out the evil which is destroying his spirit's life, in His own wise way, though He may see it good to leave His guilty child for a time in the outer darkness, where is the 'wailing, and weeping, and gnashing of teeth,' to expose him to the 'Worm which dieth not, or to the Fire which is not quenched.'

328. v. 32. *so that He may deal mercifully with them all*, that is, both Jews and Gentiles, the whole human race. These words may point to a blessing to be bestowed at some *future* day; and the Apostle may be speaking of the whole race *collectively*, not of individuals, who may despise and reject then, as now, the mercy, which God is ready to bestow. For the word 'all' does not here, as in Rom. v. 18, imply necessarily every individual; and St. Paul is, no doubt, referring in his mind to the glorious time which shall be, when Jew and Gentile shall be partakers together of the blessings of the Gospel, though many individuals may be unfaithful and disobedient then, even as now. But the words which we have just been considering, as well as other passages which we have had brought before us in this Epistle, prove more than this, and whatever these particular words may imply, those other words give us ground to believe that God has concluded the whole human race under sin and unbelief and disobedience, so that, allowing no one to put forth a claim, as a matter of right, He may have mercy upon all.

For what a mockery of hope would it be for any human being, one of whose choicest 'gifts' from the Hand of his Creator is this love of his kind, which makes him long for the welfare of his fellow-men, to be told that God will have mercy upon some men, who shall live ages hence, not those who are living now, the generation with which he himself is personally conversant, for whom he has laboured, by whom he has been loved, or, perhaps, hated? It is for these, more than for all others, that his soul, like Stephen's, or like his Heavenly Master's, yearns. And, if there be no hope for these multitudes of his own countrymen, acquaintance, kinsmen,—if the countless myriads of his own age must go down into the pit, and dwell in horrible, hopeless misery, for ever and ever,—what matters it to him what will become of those, who shall be born a thousand years hence, or what shall become of himself, or the Universe? It would be, indeed, a dreadful world to live in. Let him 'curse God, and die.' Yes! there is one other course he might take, worthy only of such a state of things. He may wrap himself up in utter selfishness. He may steel his heart to all true and tender human feeling. Brothers or sisters, children or friends, kindred, and country, and the human race at large, what are they worth considering, so that he can but save his own miserable soul? Let it not embitter his joy on earth or in heaven, to know that his noble boy has died on some battle-field, cut off in the prime of his career, while now, at all events, doing manfully his duty in his station, although in God's Great Book, and in his own conscience too, there are registered sins of his youth, which had not yet been truly and deeply repented of, and washed with floods of godly tears,—which now there is no time to repent of, for he has

laid down his life in the service of his Sovereign, whom God's word teaches him to honour and obey. Or why should he suffer it to grieve his soul, that his daughter groans with a mother's deep anguish over the death of *her* child, struck down by some sudden blow, as to human eyes it seems, without repentance, and, as some would say, without hope? What has he to do with such matters, except, indeed, that he may use them as wholesome medicine, for his own spirit's health? They may serve to keep him low in abasement, to keep him from putting too much trust in the Power, and Wisdom, and Faithfulness, and in the Fatherly Love, of God.

No! the 'gifts and calling of God are not repented of.' And, whom He has called to know anything of His Name, He means to know it; and, whom He has endowed with gifts for serving Him, He means to serve Him. Though it may be through a long and sore discipline, the work will be wrought at last, and death and hell shall be cast themselves into the lake of fire, and God shall be all in all.

## CHAP. XI. 33—36.

(33) O the depth of the Riches and Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and untraceable His ways! (34) For 'who hath known the Mind of the Lord? Or who hath become His fellow-counsellor?' (35) Or who hath given first to Him, and it shall be returned to him again? (36) For of Him, and by Him, and to Him, are all things. To Him be glory for ever! Amen.

## NOTES.

329. v. 33. *O the depth of the Riches and Wisdom and Knowledge of God?* Of His *Riches*, for 'who hath first given unto Him?' 'of Him are all things;'—of His *Wisdom*, for 'who hath been His counsellor?' 'through Him are all things;' of His *Knowledge*, for 'who hath known the Mind of the Lord, His plans and purposes, the way by which, the end to which, all things are moving? Yes! Thanks be to God, we do know the end,—

'That one Divine far-off event,  
To which the whole Creation moves.'

To Him are all things, to whom be glory, for ever and ever! Amen.

## CHAP. XII. 1—9.

(1) I exhort you, then, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies, a living sacrifice, holy, well-pleasing unto God, your rational service. (2) And be not fashioned with this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that ye may prove what is the will of God, the good and well-pleasing and perfect. (3) For, I say, by the grace which is given to me, to every one who is among you, not to be high-minded beyond what it is right to be minded, but to be minded unto sober-mindedness, as God hath appointed to each a measure of faith. (4) For just as, in one body, we have many members, but all the members have not the same office; (5) so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and each, singly, members of one another. (6) Having then gifts, differing according to the grace which is given to us, whether preaching, *let us preach* according to the proportion of faith, (7) or ministry, *let us abide* in our ministry, or he that teacheth in his teaching, (8) or he that exhorteth, in his exhortation; (9) he that distributeth, in his liberality; he that presideth, in diligence; he that sheweth mercy, in cheerfulness.

## NOTES.

330. v. 1. Since, then, you Gentiles have been so highly blessed with the full revelation of your Father's Love, while the Jews, as a body, have for the present been laid aside, give up yourselves as a living sacrifice, instead of that sacrifice of dead beasts, which their Temple service offered,—give up your bodily members (vi. 13, 16) to be agents of the redeemed spirit, as 'instruments of righteousness,' unto God, which is the 'reasonable' service God desires of you, as his children and intelligent creatures,—not a system of ritual observances, the time for which is now gone by, but



the worship in spirit and in truth, which God delights in, which becomes a living, enlightened, reasonable man.

331. v. 2. Do not fashion yourselves, or guide your actions, by the rules and maxims of the world. Let not your aims and ends be low and grovelling. But fix the eyes of your mind on high; have God in your thoughts always, and seek to be changed more and more from your old natural state into the likeness of your Lord. So shall you grow more truly and perfectly to know your Heavenly Father's will. Your spiritual senses shall be quickened, and in God's own Light you shall see light.

332. v. 3. For, though a stranger, and unknown to you in person, yet, through the office with which I am entrusted, and the grace which God has given me for the right discharge of it, I give this charge to you all, that you, each one, labour, according to the gift of God, which you have severally received, to bring forth fruit to his praise, harmoniously co-operating, as members of one body, each one honouring and esteeming the other for the gift he possesses, though it may be different from his own, each contributing his own share to the common end, but all working together to glorify God by the willing sacrifice of body, soul, and spirit, which are His.

333. v. 6. *preaching*. This appears to be the modern word, most nearly corresponding to that which is usually translated 'propheying,' but which is used to express the gift, granted to some then as now, and in all ages of the Church, of speaking boldly out, in strong, stirring language, the living truths of God, and exhibiting their bearings upon the past, the present, and the future.

334. v. 6. *according to the proportion of faith*, that is, according to the measure of faith he has received, not with an over-bearing, self-magnifying spirit, but with the moderation of men, who remember that the talents which they use, are God's, and that they are responsible for the due use of them, whatever they may be.

## CHAP. XII. 9—21.

(9) Let love be unfeigned. Be ye hating evil, cleaving to good,—(10) in brotherly love affectionate to one another,—in honour preferring one another,—(11) in diligence, not slothful, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord,—(12) rejoicing in hope, enduring patiently in tribulation, persevering in prayer,—(13) imparting to

the necessities of the saints, following after hospitality.

(14) Bless them that persecute you, bless, and curse not.

(15) *Remember* to rejoice with the rejoicing and weep with the weeping. (16) Be of the same mind to one

another, not minding high things, but led away with humble things. Become not wise in your own conceits.

(17) Repay to no one evil for evil. Provide things excellent in the sight of all men. (18) If possible, for

your part, keep peace with all men. (19) Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place to wrath; for it is

written, 'Vengeance is for me, I will repay, saith the Lord.' (20) If, then, thine enemy hunger, feed him;

if he thirst, give him drink; for, this doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. (21) Be not overcome

by evil, but overcome evil with good.

#### NOTES.

335. v. 16. *led away with*, going contentedly off with, 'putting up' cheerfully with.

336. v. 20. *thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head*, that is, in this very way you will be taking the most effectual means to melt him into amity and love, even if you do not succeed, because of the hardness of his heart.

337. It must be noted, as remarked in the Introduction (p. 4), that not a word is said in this chapter about Church offices of any kind or ordained ministers. For it can hardly be supposed that the expression in verse 8, 'he that presideth,' can point to him, who presides in the Church, as Bishop, Presbyter, or Pastor, inasmuch as that, which would be the higher office, would then, in the Apostle's list, come after the lower offices of 'preaching,' 'ministering,' 'teaching,' 'exhorting,' 'distributing,' and would be thrust in confusedly before that of showing mercy.

#### CHAP. XIII. 1—14.

(1) Let every soul be subject to the superior authorities. For there is no authority, except from God:

but the authorities, that are, have been ordained of God. (2) So, then, he, who resisteth the authority, resisteth the ordinance of God ; but they, who resist, shall take to themselves condemnation. (3) For rulers are not a terror of good works, but of evil. But wilt thou not be afraid of the authority ? Be doing the good, and thou shalt have the praise from it (*the authority*). (4) For it is the minister of God to thee for good. But, if thou do the evil, be afraid ; for it is the minister of God, an avenger of wrath to him that does evil. (5) Wherefore it is needful to be subject, not only with a view to the wrath, but also with a view to conscience. (6) For, with a view to this, pay ye tribute also ; for they (*the collectors*) are officers of God, attending continually on this particular thing. (7) Render, therefore, to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, tax to whom tax, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour. (8) Be owing nothing to any one, except to love one another ; for he, that loveth the other, has fulfilled the law. (9) For that, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery,' 'Thou shalt not kill,' 'Thou shalt not steal,' 'Thou shalt not bear false witness,' 'Thou shalt not covet,' and, if there be any other commandment, it is being summed up in this word, namely, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' (10) Love worketh no ill to one's neighbour ; love, then, is the fulfilling of the law. (11) And that *do*, knowing the season, that it is time for us now to be roused out of sleep ; for now is salvation nearer to us, than when we believed. (12) The night-is far spent, but the day is at hand. Let us put off, then, the works of darkness, and put on the equipment of light. (13) As if in the day,

let us walk becomingly, not in revels and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and party-spirit. (14) But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh unto lusts.

## NOTES.

338. It is remarkable that, in the above passage also, where an occasion is so obviously given for it, there is no reference to any ecclesiastical authority of any kind existing at Rome. Nero was at this time the Roman Emperor.

339. Whereas they are for judging and condemning their rulers, they shall be condemned themselves.

340. v. 4. *an avenger to execute wrath.* They are ministers to execute 'wrath,' as well as blessing, executing on His behalf, and, in their measure, helping to reveal that wrath of God which is declared against all wilful evil.

341. v. 5. It is plain that St. Paul does teach in this chapter the duty of absolute submission to constituted authority, acting within its own proper sphere. But it would be wrong to quote a few texts, such as these, as expressing the *whole* of the Apostle's mind upon the subject. Whatever lesson we may wish to draw from his teaching, on these and other matters, must be drawn from a general view of all that he has said and done, not from a few words only, which he might have modified with reference to special circumstances. For instance, 'Be doing good, and thou shalt have praise of the authority,' would, certainly, not apply to all the acts of the Roman Emperor, Nero, or his officers. And, in the rapid changes of government, which took place after his death, when, within twelve months, there were four Emperors, whose supporters fought with one another, it must have been difficult for a Christian of 'Cæsar's household' not to feel it to be his duty to resist the 'superior authority' for the time being, and seek to place a Vespasian in the room of a Vitellius, or to do what Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer did, when they supported Lady Jane Grey upon the throne, which belonged to Queen Mary.

The *point*, however, of his teaching, is this, that we are to regard all rightly constituted authority as God's merciful provision for good, and, as such, to reverence and submit to it,—to make this our ruling *principle* of life, not only for fear of punishment, but also for conscience' sake, and the sense of duty towards God—whatever exceptions we may, for conscience' sake, and a sense of duty towards God in matters of yet higher moment, be compelled to make at times in the carrying out of the rule.

342. v. 8. You can never pay the debt of love. You must always be owing that, though you pay daily.

343. v. 11. The 'salvation,' here referred to, as near at hand, is probably that which would be manifested at the appearance of the Lord, which the Apostle thought was imminent. 'The Day of the Lord is at hand, nearer than it was when we first received the message of His Love in the Gospel. Let us prepare for the coming of our King and the brightness of His appearing.'

## CHAP. XIV. 1—23.

(1) Him that is weak in the faith take to yourselves, *but* not for decisions of doubts. (2) For one believes to eat all things ; but one, who is weak, eats herbs. (3) Let not him, that eats, despise him that eats not, and let not him, that eats not, judge him that eats ; for God took him to himself. (4) You, who are you, that judgest another man's domestic ? To his own master he stands or falls. Nay, but he shall be kept standing ; for God is able to make him stand. (5) One esteems one day above another ; another esteems every day. Let each be fully persuaded in his own mind. (6) He, that regards the day, regards it to the Lord ; and he, that regards not the day, to the Lord he regards it not. He that eats, eats to the Lord ; for he thanks God ; and he that eats not, to the Lord he eats not, and thanks God. (7) For no one lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. (8) For, whether we live, we live unto the Lord ; or, whether we die, we die unto the Lord. Whether, therefore, we live, or whether we die, we are the Lord's. (9) For to this end Christ both died, and lived, so that He may have lordship both over dead and living men. (10) But thou, why judgest thou thy brother ? Or thou too, why despisest thou

thy brother ? For we shall all present ourselves before the tribunal of God. (11) For it is written, 'As I live, saith the Lord, to me shall every knee bow, and every tongue shall confess to God.' (12) So then each of us shall give account for himself to God. (13) Let us no longer, then, be judging one another. But this determine rather, not to lay a stumblingblock for a brother, or a snare. (14) I know and am sure in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean of itself ; only to one, that considereth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. (15) But if for food's sake thy brother is being grieved, thou art no longer walking according to charity. Do not with thy food be destroying him, on behalf of whom Christ died. (16) Let not then your good be evil spoken of. (17) For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. (18) For he, that in this serveth Christ, is well-pleasing to God, and approved of men. (19) So, then, let us follow after the things of peace, and things of edification for one another. (20) Do not, on account of meat, be destroying the work of God. All things, indeed, are clean ; but it is ill to that man who eats with a stumblingblock. (21) It is good not to eat flesh, nor drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is snared, or is weak. (22) The faith, which thou hast, have to thyself before God. Happy is the man, who condemneth not himself in that which he approveth. (23) But he, that doubteth, is condemned if he eat, because *it* (*his act*) is not of faith. But everything, which is not of faith, is sin.

## NOTES.

344. The Apostle well knew that in Rome, as everywhere else, there would be sure to arise disputes between the Jewish and Gentile believers; and while desirous that the latter should be freed from the yoke of ceremonial observances, he wished them charitably to respect the scruples of their Jewish brethren, and these, on the other hand, not to condemn the liberty of the others.

345. v. 1. *in the faith*, in the Christian faith, not yet understanding the principles of Christianity, not realizing the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and still retaining more or less of the Jewish scrupulosity.

346. v. 1. *take to yourselves*, as an associate, in a friendly and kindly spirit.

347. v. 1. *not for decisions of doubts*, not to decide about his scruples, or put them down, in a short, sharp, peremptory way, condemning them as needless, or ridiculing them as absurd.

348. v. 2. *eat herbs*, for fear of eating unclean meat, things strangled, blood, &c. There does not seem to be any reference here to food offered to idols.

349. v. 3. *took him to Himself*, when He called him to the knowledge of His Word of Life in the Gospel, and took him to Himself as a servant, yea, rather, as a child.

350. v. 15. Do not for thy paltry morsel of food be destroying (be for destroying), humanly speaking, and as far as in you lies, one on behalf of whom Christ was willing to forego, not merely food, indeed, but life itself.

351. v. 4. 'You may condemn him as strongly as you please, because he does not walk by your rule, or utter the Shibboleth of your party. But in God's sight he is not condemned, if sincere in his desire and aim, to please in all things the Great Master, who is the only true Judge of all His servants' doings.

352. v. 6. The Apostle says that the man, who keeps the day, as the Sunday, even with Jewish strictness, because he believes it to be his Lord's will that he should, is keeping it to the Lord, and will receive his reward. But he says also, that he who does not keep it with the same strictness, but does this with a conscientious desire to please his Heavenly Master, by using soberly and thankfully the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free, is equally pleasing to his Lord, and will receive also his reward.

353. v. 7. For this is the true Spirit of a Christian's life, that he

should give up, not one day in seven, but all his days—his whole life, and his death also,—to the Lord who owns him.

354. v. 9. He is the Lord both of dead and living; He rules in the world beyond the grave as here; He appoints to each the portion of blessing or of chastisement after death, as in life.

355. v. 16. 'It is a good thing, we might say, to know that Christ does not require of us the observance of the Jewish Sabbath. It is a good thing to know that, without a form of prayer, or set times and places, "neither in Jerusalem, nor in this mountain," we can worship the Father—to know that there is no rite, or ceremony, or ordinance, that God cannot dispense with, or, rather, that there is none which we are required to observe, except so far as they tend to a moral end. It is a good thing to know that Revelation can be interpreted by no other light than that of Reason. It is a good thing to know that God is not extreme to mark human infirmities in our lives and in our conduct. But all this may serve for a cloak of licentiousness, may be a scandal among men, and, humanly speaking, the destruction of those for whom Christ died.' *Jowett.*

356. v. 17. The joyful freedom of God's Kingdom does not consist in having license to enjoy freely the good things of this life—but in the living joy and freedom of the heart, in the sense of God's favour, in the power to live as becomes a child of God glorifying Him, either in the thankful use of His bounties, or, if we can serve Him better among our brethren by so doing, in the cheerful resignation of them.

357. v. 18. *he that in those things.* It is very possible that the true reading here is, 'he that in this,'—namely, in the Holy Ghost—'serveth Christ, is pleasing to God, and approved among men.' And the truth is, that even worldly men will secretly honour the faithful life of a true Christian, who follows righteousness and peace among men, renouncing his own private wishes for the sake of others, and content with that rich treasure of heart-joy, which God will abundantly pour into his bosom.

358. v. 21. There must be, of course, a limit to this. It would do our brother no good merely to give way to some idle fancy or ignorant prejudice of his. And there are cases (as, for instance, with reference to the observance of the Sunday or Tee-totalism) in which it is absolutely necessary, for his good, that we refuse to comply with his morbid scruples and mistaken practices, and eat flesh and drink wine, in order to express our plain dissent from them. Only on such occasions, let us remember that we have to answer to our Lord for our conduct in such a matter. Let us take care that we are not influenced by a merely selfish and self-asserting spirit—that we are clear as to the duty of maintaining a higher principle, at a sacrifice, for the present, of this rule of the Apostle—that we are



ready in heart to act upon it still, whenever a right occasion calls for it.

359. v. 23. 'There are many occasions in which our first thoughts, or, to speak more correctly, our instinctive perceptions, are true and right,—in which it is not too much to say, that he, who deliberates, is lost. The very act of turning to a book, or referring to another, enfeebles our power of action. Works of art are produced we know not how, by some simultaneous movement of hand and thought, which seems to lend to each other force and meaning. So, in moral action, the true view does not separate the intention from the act, or the act from the circumstances which surround it, but regards them as one, and absolutely indivisible. In the performance of the act, and in the judgment of it, the will and the execution, the hand and the thought, are to be considered as one. Those, who act most energetically, who in difficult circumstances judge the most truly, do not separately pass in review the rules, and principles, and counter-principles, of action, but grasp them at once in a single instant. Those, who act most truthfully, honestly, firmly, manfully, consistently, take least time to deliberate. Such should be the attitude of our minds in all questions of right and wrong, truth and falsehood. We may not inquire, but act.' *Jowett.*

## CHAP. XV. 1—13.

(1) We, however, who are strong, ought to be bearing the infirmities of the weak, not to be pleasing ourselves. (2) Let each of us please his neighbour for good unto edification. (3) For even Christ pleased not Himself, but, as it is written, 'The revilings of those reviling Thee fell on me.' (4) For what things were written aforetime, were written aforetime for our instruction, so that, through endurance and comfort of the Scriptures, we may have our hope. (5) But the God of endurance and comfort grant you to have one mind among one another, according to Christ Jesus; (6) so that, with one accord, with one mouth, ye may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (7) Wherefore take to yourselves one another, as Christ

also took you to Himself, to the glory of God. (8) I mean that Jesus Christ is the minister of circumcision for the Truth of God, so as to confirm the promises made unto the fathers; (9) but that the Gentiles for His Mercy should glorify God, as it is written, 'For this cause will I confess to Thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto Thy Name.' (10) And again, he says, 'Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with His people.' (11) And again, 'Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles, and laud Him, all ye peoples.' (12) And again, Esaias saith, 'There shall be the root of Jesse, and He who is to rise up to rule over the Gentiles; in Him shall the Gentiles hope.' (13) Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

## NOTES.

360. v. 3. *even Christ*, our Lord and Master, lived not to please Himself; He bare our griefs, and carried our infirmities. Surely, then, we may well bear the infirmities of one another.

361. v. 3. *as it is written, &c.* If this passage be understood in its strict meaning, as it occurs in the Psalm, St. Paul quotes it as prophetic of the Messiah, feeling the revilings of those who reviled His Heavenly Father. But St. Paul possibly quotes it in his usual way, merely, as illustrating the self-sacrificing, sympathising spirit of our Lord's life, without recalling distinctly to his mind to whom the pronoun 'Thee' pointed. 'He pleased not Himself;' but his whole life is well described in that passage of the Psalmist, 'who suffers when another suffers, and is reviled when he is reviled.'

362. v. 4. It is difficult to see whether the Apostle means to say, 'through the exercise of endurance on our parts, and through the comfort which we derive from the Scriptures,' or rather 'through the endurance and comfort of the Scriptures,' that is, through the examples of endurance and comfort, which we find in the Scriptures.

363. v. 5. *the God of endurance and comfort*, that is, the Giver of the grace of endurance and of all consolation. -

364. v. 7. *take to yourselves one another*, both Jew and Gentile,—live in mutual love with one another, since Christ has taken you both together in one body to Himself.

365. v. 8. On the one hand, Jesus Christ is the minister of the circumcision, to confirm the ancient promises, to make good the *Truth* of God to the *Jews*; on the other hand, He is the Messenger of God's Free Grace and *Mercy* to the *Gentiles*.

366. v. 9. *as it is written, &c.* As this doctrine, of the admission of the Gentiles to equal privileges with themselves, was so strange and unpalatable to the Jews of his day, St. Paul quotes again several passages from the prophetic writings, to show that it is no *new* doctrine after all,—that they might have understood the mind of God all along in this respect,—for the Gentiles are everywhere mingled up with the blessings promised to the Jewish people.

367. v. 9. *for this cause will I confess to Thee among the Gentiles, &c.* These words are quoted from the LXX. of Psalm xviii. 49, and are parts of David's song of praise, 'In the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul.' St. Paul here adapts this to his own purpose.

368. v. 10. *Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with His people.* 'These words are taken from Deut. xxxii. 43, in which passage Moses exhorts the heathen to sing the praises of God for His dealings with the Jewish people. The verse in the LXX. is greatly interpolated, and, in the midst of the interpolation, exhibits the words here quoted.' *Jowett.*

368. v. 11. *Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles, &c.* "These words are taken, with a slight change in their order, from Psalm cxvii. 1. The writer of the Psalm meant to say, 'Praise the Lord, all ye nations, for His Goodness to Israel, His people.' The application which St. Paul makes of the words, is, 'Praise the Lord, O ye Gentiles, for He has given you a share in His Mercies to the House of Israel.'" *Jowett.*

## CHAP. XV. 14—33.

(14) And I myself also am persuaded, my brethren, concerning you, that you yourselves also are full of goodness, being filled with all knowledge, being able also to admonish one another. (15) But I wrote the more boldly to you, brethren, in some measure as reminding you once again, through the grace which has been given

to me by God, (16) so as that I should be minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, officiating as to the Gospel of God, that so the offering up of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Ghost. (17) I have, then, my confidence in Christ Jesus in things pertaining to God. (18) For I will not undertake to say anything of that, which Christ has not wrought by me, for the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed, (19) by the might of signs and wonders, by the might of the Spirit of God ; so that from Jerusalem, and all round to Illyricum, I have published fully the Gospel of Christ, (20) but so making it a point to preach the Gospel, not where Christ was named, that so I may not be building on another man's foundation. (21) But, as it is written, 'They to whom it was not reported about Him, shall see, and they who have not heard, shall understand.' (22) For which cause also I was chiefly hindered from coming to you. (23) But now, having no more place in these parts, and having had a longing these many years to come to you, (24) whenever I journey into Spain I will come to you. For I hope, on my journey through, to see you, and be forwarded on by you thither, if first I shall have had in a measure my fill of you. (25) But now I am going to journey to Jerusalem, ministering to the saints. (26) For Macedonia and Achaia have thought good to make a certain contribution for the poor of the saints in Jerusalem. (27) They have thought good, truly, and they are their debtors. For, if the Gentiles were made to share in their spiritual things, they ought also to minister to them in fleshly things. (28) Having then completed this, and having sealed to them this fruit, I

shall go off by you into Spain. (29) But I know that, coming to you, I shall come with the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. (30) But I exhort you, brethren, by the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Love of the Spirit, to strive together with me, in prayers on my behalf before God ; (31) so that I may be delivered from the unbelieving in Judæa, and so that my ministry to Jerusalem may turn out acceptable to the saints ; (32) so that I may come with joy to you by the Will of God, and refresh myself with you. (33) But the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

## NOTES.

369. v. 14. I know that you do not need these words of mine. And this, in fact, emboldened me the more to write rather freely to you, as only *reminding* you, in discharge of my duty as an Apostle, of what you know already. 'St. Paul was a man of the finest manners ever known.' *Coleridge*.

370. v. 17. As then a minister of Christ to the Gentiles, I can proceed with confidence in the discharge of my duty, as, for instance, that of now addressing you,—a confidence placed, not, of course, in myself, but in my Lord.

371. v. 18. *I will not undertake to say anything of that which Christ has not wrought by me.* These words are usually explained to mean, 'I will not speak of anything which Christ has wrought by the other Apostles, or by my disciples,—only of what He has wrought by myself individually.' But, possibly, they may be used in the English idiom, 'I will not say what Christ has *not* done by me,' that is, 'He has wrought all kinds of wonderful results by me.' The context, which follows, certainly favours this.

372. v. 19. *all round to Illyricum.* Perhaps, St. Paul refers to what he did, as briefly mentioned in Acts xx. 1, 2, 'when he departed for to go into Macedonia. And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece.'

373. v. 21. I made it a point, rather to act in the spirit of those prophetic words, &c.

374. v. 22. And this,—namely, my being engaged in preaching to others, who had never had a teacher,—was the reason of my being delayed in coming to you.

375. v. 24. St. Paul does not speak of coming expressly to Rome, for the purpose of seeing them, and staying with them, perhaps for some months or years, as he had done at Corinth and Ephesus. That would have been too bold a proposal, for a man of his refined delicacy of feeling. He will see them *in passing*, meaning, we may be sure, to stay with them as long as he found it desirable to do so.

376. v. 27. *they are their debtors*, that is, it is quite right that they should do this, it is no more than they are bound to do.

377. v. 29. *I shall come to you with the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ*. He refers to the rich spiritual blessings, which God (he was sure) would impart to them by his ministry, or, rather, (i. 11, 12) which he himself should be privileged to share with them in the communion of saints.

378. v. 30. St. Paul, it seems, had a strong presentiment of the dangers which threatened him at Jerusalem, and which made him say to the elders of Ephesus, 'Ye shall see my face no more.'

379. v. 31. These dangers threatened him from two sources, (1) the open hostility of the unbelieving Jews, (2) the secret suspicions of the believing Jews. These latter he hoped to quiet by the signs of respect and love which he brought from the Gentile Churches, if they would accept the present pleasantly from his hands. Nothing is said in Acts xxi. about the way in which these offerings of the Gentiles were received by the Church at Jerusalem: and, in fact, the whole tone of the passage in Acts xxi. 20-25, implies that there was still no friendly feeling for him among the 'multitude,' the 'many thousands' of Jews which 'believed,' and were all 'zealous of the Law.'

380. v. 32. *so that I may come with joy to you, by the will of God, and refresh myself with you*. 'Man proposes, God disposes.' St. Paul came to them, indeed, at the very time he contemplated, as soon as he had taken these gifts to Jerusalem. But he came as a prisoner,—after having been 'beaten' and nearly 'pulled to pieces' by his own countrymen,—'bound' by the chief captain, and ordered to be 'examined by scourging,' brought before the 'chief priests and all their council,'—plotted against by 'more than forty men, who bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink, till they had killed him,'—sent off by night to Felix, and left by him in bonds, after having been kept two years in custody,—examined before Agrippa under Festus, and despatched to Rome, which he reached at last, after perilous shipwreck. And then, instead of seeing them at Rome in passing, God's Providence ordained that, though still detained as a prisoner, he 'dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the Kingdom of

God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.'

## CHAP. XVI. 1—16.

(1) Now I commend to you Phœbe our sister, who is a servant of the Church at Cenchreæ; (2) so that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and may assist her in whatever manner she may need you; for, in fact, she shewed herself a succourer of many, and of me myself. (3) Salute Prisca and Aquila, my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus,—(4) (*persons*, who laid down their own neck on behalf of my life, whom not only I thank, but also all the Churches of the Gentiles,—) (5) and the church in their house. Salute Epenetus, my beloved, who is the first-fruits of Achaia unto Christ. (6) Salute Mary, *one* who laboured much upon us. (7) Salute Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and fellow-prisoners, *persons*, who were of note among the Apostles, who in fact were in Christ before me. (8) Salute Amplias, my beloved in the Lord. (9) Salute Urbanus, my fellow-worker in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. (10) Salute Apelles, the approved in Christ. Salute those of the household of Aristobulus. (11) Salute Herodion, my kinsman. Salute those of the household of Narcissus, who are in the Lord. (12) Salute Tryphœna and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute Persis the beloved, one who laboured much in the Lord. (13) Salute Rufus, the chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. (14) Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren with them. (15) Salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the

saints with them. (16) Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ salute you.

#### NOTES.

381. v. 1. *servant*. It is probable that Phœbe was a 'deaconess' of the Church, at Cenchreæ, the port of Corinth, about nine miles from it. Pliny, in his letter to Trajan, expressly mentions that he had put two maid-servants to the torture, who 'were called Ministræ,' that is, deaconesses. In Greece and the East, where women were kept in much greater seclusion than at Rome, such persons would be needed for the instruction of female converts, as well as for charitable services to the sick and needy. No doubt Phœbe took this letter to Rome, and her going was the immediate occasion of the Apostle's writing it. From the use of two legal terms in the Greek of this passage, translated 'assist' and 'succourer,' it is conjectured that her 'business' was connected with some trial at law.

382. v. 2. *and of me myself*. Possibly Phœbe had lodged the Apostle, when he came to Cenchreæ, for embarkation, being about to 'sail into Syria, with Priscilla and Aquila, having shorn his head in Cenchreæ.' Acts xviii. 18.

383. v. 3. Priscilla is the diminutive of Prisca. Priscilla and Aquila had now returned to Rome (Intro. p. 23), and would heartily welcome this letter from their beloved teacher and friend, and, doubtless, would take care that it should be circulated, as largely as possible, among their acquaintances at Rome. They had been 'fellow-workers' with him at Corinth and Ephesus, and had probably incurred danger for him in the violent tumult at Ephesus, of which he speaks so feelingly in 1 Cor. xv. 32 and 2 Cor. i. 8. It is noticeable that the *wife* is mentioned first, here and elsewhere, as if she were the most prominent and zealous of the two, or, it may be, the most able and intelligent. She took part, at any rate, in the teaching of Apollos.

384. v. 4. *all the churches of the Gentiles* "had reason to be thankful to them, for having rescued the 'Apostle of the Gentiles' from danger." *Alford*.

385. v. 5. *the church in their house*, either the members of their family being all Christians, or the believers being accustomed to meet for worship and Christian converse in their house. *Alford* quotes the answer of Justin Martyr to the question of the præfect Rusticus, 'Where do you assemble?' His reply was, 'Where each one can and will. You believe, no doubt, that we all meet together in one place. But it is not so; for the God of the Christians is not shut up in a room; but, being invisible, He



fills both heaven and earth, and is honoured everywhere by the faithful. Justin adds that, when he came to Rome, he was accustomed to dwell in one particular spot, and that those Christians, who *were instructed by him, and wished to hear his discourse, used to meet at his house*. Doubtless, Aquila and Priscilla carried on still at Rome the business of instruction, in which they had been engaged at Corinth and Ephesus.

386. v. 5. In 1 Cor. xvi. 15, St. Paul speaks of the 'house of Stephanas,' as the first-fruits of Achaia. Probably Epenetus was one of this house. Some MSS. read Asia for Achaia.

387. v. 6. None of the persons whose names are here mentioned, from verse 5 to verse 15, twenty-five in number, besides others who are referred to, are named anywhere else in the New Testament. Of these, Mary appears to have shown the Apostle some personal kindness; Andronicus and Junias seem to have been somewhere in bonds with him, who was 'in prisons oft;' Urbanus had 'worked with' him; Persis, 'the beloved, who laboured much in the Lord,' seems also to have come at some time under the Apostle's personal cognisance; and Rufus and his mother were probably known to the Apostle. Omitting these seven, and Aristobulus and Narcissus, (note 389,) there will remain sixteen persons named, and others referred to, whom St. Paul salutes, but who may or may not have been known to him in person, but of whom he may have heard from Aquila and Priscilla, and others. (See Introd. p. 30.)

388. v. 7. *Junias*, the name of a man, not Junia: *kinsmen*, that is, Jews, like himself (ix. 3, xvi. 11, 21).

389. v. 7. *who were of note among the Apostles*, that is, distinguished as Apostles. So says Chrysostom, 'To be Apostles is a great thing; but to be also among those distinguished, consider how great is the praise!' For Paul to speak of any persons as "celebrated among the Apostles," that is, among the Twelve, would imply that he had more frequent intercourse with the Twelve than we know he had.' *Alford*. 'Andronicus and Junias may have been of the number of those mentioned in Acts viii. 4; xi. 19—21, who were not unworthy to be classed with Barnabas and Paul, Acts xiv. 4, 14.' *Peile*.

390. v. 7. *who were in Christ before me*, who were Christian believers before I was.

391. v. 10. It would seem that Aristobulus and Narcissus (v. 11) were not themselves believers, though some of their people were. Does not this again intimate that St. Paul must have *heard* of these, without having known them personally? Aristobulus and Narcissus appear, both of them, to have been men of distinction, having large households. And, in fact, Aristobulus was, probably, the great-grandson of Herod the Great, mention-

ed by Josephus and Tacitus, to whom Nero, in A.D. 55, gave the government of Lesser Armenia. He had very likely lived previously at Rome, and may still have kept up an establishment there, or, perhaps, had not yet gone to his government. 'Narcissus was not the well-known favourite of Claudius, who was put to death by Nero, A.D. 54, before this epistle was written, but another person of the same name, who was a favourite of Nero's, and put to death by Galba.' *Conybeare and Howson*.

392. v. 13. 'St. Mark mentions Simon of Cyrene, as the "father of Alexander and Rufus." The latter, therefore, was a Christian, well known to those for whom St. Mark wrote, and probably is the same here mentioned. It is gratifying to think that she, whom St. Paul mentions here with such respectful affection, was the wife of that Simon, who bore our Saviour's Cross.' *Conybeare and Howson*.

393. v. 14. *Hermas*, not the author of the 'Shepherd,' who lived about A.D. 150.

394. v. 12. St. Paul appears to have heard of the two women, Tryphœna and Tryphosa, as being active in labours of instruction or of mercy at Rome. Persis he had, probably, met with on some former occasion, as is indicated by his saying that she 'laboured much,' in the past tense.

395. v. 16. *Salute one another with a holy kiss*. In ancient times, as now in many foreign countries, a kiss was the usual salutation between friends, 2 Sam. xx. 9; Luke viii. 45. This custom the Christians adopted, and it was regularly practised in their religious assemblies, as a sign of the close friendship and brotherly kindness, which bound them all as one body together. So says Justin Martyr. 'Prayers being ended, we salute one another with a kiss, and then the bread and the cup is brought to the president, &c.' But, on those occasions, the men and women, sitting separately, after the custom of the synagogue, saluted only those of their own sex. So we find it in the Apost. Constit. ii. 57, 'On the other side, let the laity sit, with all silence, and good order; and the women, let them also sit separately, keeping silence. . . . Then let the men salute one another, and the women one another, with the kiss in the Lord.'

396. v. 16. *All the churches of Christ salute you*. From his relations to them, St. Paul can pledge 'all the churches' to this, without, of course, communicating with them.

## CHAP. XVI. 17—27.

(17) But I beseech you, brethren, to mark those who cause divisions and scandals, contrary to the doc-

trine which you have learned ; and turn away from them. (18) For such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly ; and, through fair speaking and glosing, they deceive outright the hearts of the simple. (19) For your obedience came abroad to all. I rejoyce, therefore, at the state of things among you. But I would have you to be wise, indeed, with respect to what is good, but pure with respect to what is evil. (20) But the God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your feet quickly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

(21) There salute you Timothy, my fellow-worker, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

(22) I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord.

(23) Gaius, mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus, the chamberlain of the city, saluteth you, and Quartus, the brother.

(24) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

(25) Now to Him, that is able to establish you, according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which has been kept secret in the eternal ages, (26) but was manifested now, and by propheticall Scriptures, according to the command of the Eternal God, made known to all nations, for obedience of faith, (27) to God only wise, through Jesus Christ, be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

## NOTES.

397. v. 17. The Apostle does not apparently refer to Judaizing teachers expressly, nor to any particular kind of false doctrine. But,

knowing well that evil would come in some form or other, he gives them this caution beforehand, to beware of sordid, self-seeking, self-exalting men, who would form parties, and draw them aside from the simplicity that is in Christ, and the life which is according to godliness. He is now writing from Corinth, where such teachers as these had done much mischief.

398. v. 18. *their own belly*, their own low ends, interested motives, love of gain, sensual appetites, &c., of such men, 'whose god is their belly, who glory in their shame, who *mind earthly things*.'

399. v. 19. 'I say this, because I hear the best possible report of you now; your obedience to the faith is spoken of throughout the world (i. 8). But I wish you to be on your guard, to be wise and watchful for good, as well as simple and innocent, (as you are,) in respect of evil.' The Apostle's Christian courtesy and great judgment are manifest in every line.

400. v. 20. And, if you do this, marking such persons as seek to cause divisions, and turning away from them, depend upon it, the God of Peace will bless you, and soon put down the Enemy, the Evil One, that is sowing tares among the wheat of his field.

401. v. 20. *the grace, &c.* It would seem that the Apostle meant to finish his letter at this point, as far as his own remarks are concerned, and so inserted the usual blessing here. He goes on, however, to send a list of salutations from those with him, closing again with the benediction. And then he cannot refrain from adding a few more glowing words at the end, ascribing glory to God Most High, for His Blessed Gospel.

402. v. 21. *Timothy and Sopater* (Sossipater) of Berea, are mentioned (Acts xx. 4) as among those who 'went before' St. Paul, into Asia, from Corinth, at the end of his three months' stay in Greece, during which he wrote this letter to the Romans. We read of Jason, as the host of Paul and Silas, at Thessalonica, in Acts xvii. 5—9. *Lucius* is most probably St. Luke, the writer of the Acts. For it is noteworthy that the narrative in the Acts begins to run in the *first* person, in the very passage above referred to, immediately after the mention of the three months' stay in Greece. 'These going before tarried for us at Troas.'

403. v. 22. Nothing is known about this 'brother Tertius,' who was the scribe or amanuensis of St. Paul, on this occasion. His name seems to imply that he was a Roman by birth, as, no doubt, was also the 'brother Quartus.'

St. Paul usually employed such a scribe, (see 1 Cor. xvi. 21, Col. iv. 18, 2 Thess. iii. 18). But he sometimes wrote with his own hand, Gal. vi. 11. It is worth remembering that so long an epistle as that to the Romans could not have been written at one sitting, and probably required several.

This will account for his not taking up the thread of the argument, in some places, exactly as he left it.

404. v. 23. This Gaius is probably the same mentioned in 1 Cor. i. 14, as having been baptised by St. Paul, at Corinth. He was, no doubt, resident there, and so able to be the 'host of St. Paul and the *whole Church*.' By the last expression it is, perhaps, meant that the believers at Corinth met at his house for worship, or else that his hospitality to Christians coming from abroad was universal.

There was another Gaius, of Derbe, with St. Paul at Corinth, at this very time, (Acts xx. 4,) and in the same verse is named another companion of St. Paul, Aristarchus. In Acts xix. 29 Gaius and Aristarchus are mentioned as 'men of *Macedonia*, Paul's companions in travel.' It seems as if this Gaius of Derbe must be the same man with the man of Macedonia. However the name Gaius (Caius) was as common then as John is now.

405. v. 14. *the city*, that is, Corinth. Erastus is named as one that 'ministered' to St. Paul, in Acts xix. 22, with Timothy. They were then at Ephesus, and were sent to prepare the way for him in Macedonia, and thence, no doubt, went on into Achaia, where Erastus would be again at home. Hence, while in Acts xx. 4, we read of Timothy accompanying St. Paul into Asia, Erastus is no longer with him. So in 2 Tim. iv. 20, St. Paul writes that 'Erastus abode at Corinth.'

406. v. 25. It would seem from 2 Thess. iii. 17, that St. Paul always wrote with his own hand the concluding benediction, as a token that the epistle was genuine, and from himself. Here, however, before dropping the pen, after writing a second time the doxology, he appears to have gone on to add this grand ascription of praise.

407. v. 25. *my gospel*, that is, the glad tidings which I have to carry: so in ii. 16.

408. v. 25. *the preaching of Jesus Christ*, that is, the preaching about Jesus Christ, the message about Him, which, as a herald, I am commissioned to deliver to the world.

409. v. 26. St. Paul here throws in a last word, reminding his readers once more of what he has told them all along, namely, that the Gospel, which he had to preach, was no new message, but only a more clear and full declaration of that 'righteousness of God,' which He, as a Faithful Creator, had prepared for His creatures, in His infinite counsels, before the foundations of the world were laid,—a revelation of that 'mystery of godliness' in Christ Jesus, by which that righteousness is bestowed by the grace of God upon mankind,—a mystery which had been hidden hitherto, but was now made known, by God's own command, for obedience of faith, to all the nations upon earth, in full accordance with the prophetic

Scriptures of the Jews (i. 2), nay, rather, *by or through*, them, through their express intimations and injunctions, in which God's will is made known in this respect, as the Apostle has abundantly shown in the course of the epistle.

410. The following dates are adopted mainly from Conybeare and Howson's *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*.

A.D.	BIOGRAPHY OF ST. PAUL.	CONTEMPORARY EVENTS.
36.	St. Paul's Conversion.	
37.	At Damascus.	Death of Tiberius, and accession of CALIGULA.
38.	Flight from Damascus to Jerusalem, thence to Tarsus.	
39.	St. Paul preaches in Syria and Cilicia,	
40.	making Tarsus his head-quarters,	
41.	and probably undergoes most of the	Death of Caligula, and accession of CLAUDIUS.
42.	sufferings in 2 Cor. xi. 24—26, viz.	
43.	two Roman and five Jewish scourgings, and two shipwrecks.	Judæa and Samaria given to Herod Agrippa I.
44.	He is brought to Antioch, (Acts xi. 26.)	Death of Herod Agrippa I.
45.	He goes to Jerusalem with Barnabas.	
46 and 47.	At Antioch.	
48 and 49.	His First Missionary Journey from Antioch to Cyprus, Antioch (in Pisidia), Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, and back to Antioch.	
50.	St. Paul and Barnabas attend the Council at Jerusalem.	
51.	His Second Journey from Antioch to Cilicia, Lycaonia, Galatia.	
52.	Troas, Philippi, Thessalonica, Beroea, Athens, CORINTH, finds Aquila and Priscilla; writes I. Thess.	Claudius expels the Jews from Rome.
53.	At CORINTH; writes II. Thess.	Felix procurator of Judæa.
54.	Leaves Corinth for Ephesus, where he leaves Priscilla and Aquila, and goes on to Jerusalem, thence to Antioch.	Death of Claudius, and accession of NERO.
	His Third Journey. He reaches EPHESUS.	
55. and 56.	At Ephesus, with Aquila and Priscilla.	
57.	( <i>Spring.</i> ) Still at Ephesus, with Aquila and Priscilla; writes I. Cor.	
	( <i>Summer.</i> ) Macedonia; writes II. Cor.; Aquila and Priscilla at Rome.	
	( <i>Winter.</i> ) To CORINTH. Writes Gal.	
58.	( <i>Spring.</i> ) Writes Rom.; from Corinth, by Philippi and Miletus, to Jerusalem. Arrested and sent to Cæsarea.	
59.	At Cæsarea.	
60.	( <i>Autumn.</i> ) Sent to Rome by Festus.	Felix is recalled, and succeeded by Festus.
	( <i>Winter.</i> ) Shipwrecked at Malta.	
61.	( <i>Spring.</i> ) Arrives at Rome.	
62.	At Rome, in his own hired house; writes Philem., Col., Eph., Phil.	
63.	Is freed, goes to Macedonia (Phil. ii. 24) and Asia Minor, (Philem. 22.)	
64.	In Spain.	Fire of Rome: Persecution.
65.	In Spain.	Florus Procurator of Judæa.
66.	From (?) Spain to Asia (1 Tim. i. 3).	Jewish War begins.
67.	( <i>Summer.</i> ) Writes I. Tim., from Macedonia.	

## A.D. BIOGRAPHY OF ST. PAUL. CONTEMPORARY EVENTS.

- (Autumn.) Writes Tit., from Ephesus.  
 (Winter.) At Nicopolis.  
 68. (Spring.) In prison at Rome ; Writes II. Tim.  
 (Summer.) Executed May or June. Death of Nero in June.

N.B. The date of the year of our Lord is considered to represent approximately the *age* of the Apostle.

## APPENDIX. NOTE ON 262.

And thus also a reply may be given to those, who say that by the Athanasian Creed, which we read from time to time in the Church Service, we are shut up into a confession that we believe in the ordinary doctrine of Endless Punishments.

I answer, in the first place, that laymen are not bound at all by the dogmas laid down in this Creed, not even when they take their part in singing or saying it. They do not here say, as they do in repeating the other two Creeds, or as they do in repeating the Apostles' Creed in their Baptism, answering by themselves or their god-parents, each one personally for himself, 'I believe in all the statements of this Creed.' They do but repeat, at the direction of their Church, an ancient form of words, which goes, indeed, by the name of Athanasius, but which is wellknown not to have been composed by him, and to have only come into use in the Church in the fifth century, and in England in the ninth. When, in reading the alternate verse of a Psalm, a layman comes upon the words, in which David or any other fellow-man, under the Old Dispensation, in direct contradiction to the spirit of the New, curses, instead of 'blessing,' 'those who curse him,' and imprecates evil, instead of 'praying for mercy,' on the heads of 'those, who despitely use him, and persecute him,'—as when he cries, 'Let Satan stand at his right hand, and let his prayer be turned into sin ; let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow ; let there be no man to pity him, or to have compassion on his fatherless children ; let the wickedness of his fathers be had in remembrance in the sight of the Lord, and let not the sin of his mother be done away ;' or when, in another place, he says, 'The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance ; he shall wash his footsteps in the blood of the ungodly ;'—and he repeats these words, as appointed by the Church in the Daily Service ;—he does not consider that he himself is committed to such language ; he merely acts as an obedient son of the Church to which he belongs ; and he concludes that she must have some good reason for prescribing the reading of such words, among the rest, in her Services. In short, he feels no scruple of conscience, preventing him from joining in the Service here, because he holds himself at liberty to go along with the words he utters, just as far as his sense of truth, and righteousness, and love, allows, and no further.

Just so may every layman do with regard to the Athanasian Creed. To the Apostles' Creed he is bound by his Baptism. To the Athanasian Creed his conscience is in no way bound. He does not profess his personal adherence to it ; he does not say, with respect to that Creed, 'I believe.' He simply joins, as above, in obedience to the directions of his Church, in read-

ing a certain ancient form, which she pronounces to be true and scriptural, which she desires her children to hear from time to time, and requires to be sung or said in the Service. And he is at liberty to let his hearty assent go with the words, as far as his conscience allows him, and no further.

It is otherwise with a clergyman. He is bound by the Articles, which he subscribes at ordination, to hold that this Creed, as well as the other two, 'ought thoroughly to be received and believed, for it may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture.' He must be able, therefore, to give an account of the faith which he thus professes. It is, indeed, to be regretted that this Creed, by whomsoever written, should be so worded, as to present any stumblingblock to a free and hearty reception of it, on the part of either clergyman or layman—that it should be at all liable to be misunderstood—that any of its words should require such explanation, before they can be assented to, as the simple and unlearned cannot easily supply. I allude, of course, mainly, to what are commonly called the 'damnatory clauses,' at the beginning, middle, and end. There are, indeed, other phrases in it, employed in speaking of the high mysteries of the Christian Religion, which few ordinary readers could be expected fully to understand. But these do not present the great difficulty to a hearty reception of it. That arises in most minds from the damnatory clauses—from an unwillingness to pass judgment upon others for holding views on certain matters of religion, which may differ from our own, and which they may hold conscientiously, and with as earnest and humble a desire to please God in so doing, as we may have ourselves in maintaining our own Creed, and whose lives may possibly, for consistency, devotedness, and purity, condemn our own—and from a sense of the absolute wickedness of undertaking to pass such a judgment.

These clauses in the Creed are, indeed, much to be deplored. They were the offspring of a stormy and violent age, when good men, not freed from human infirmities, were too apt to usurp the place of the Great Judge, and to pass anathemas on one another. Yet even this is better than a cold, sensual indifference, which has no heart or life, which is equally unconcerned about all religious matters, about all those things of deep, eternal interest, which belong to a living man, and contents itself, perhaps, by asking, with a sneer, in the words of Pilate of old, 'What is Truth?'

But let us see what these damnatory clauses really amount to. The middle one is this, 'He, therefore, that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity.' But here our own English Version mistranslates the Latin original, which merely says, 'He, therefore, who wishes to be saved, let him thus think of the Trinity.' This is the advice which the Church gives to each enquirer—to each one who comes sincerely anxious to know the Living Truth, which she has to teach him. 'Whoever wishes to be saved,' or rather, to be safe, to be in a state of salvation, 'it is above all things necessary that he should hold the Catholick Faith.' And then follows the sentence, so terrible to many, 'Which except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly,' and this supported by the closing words of the Creed, 'This is the Catholick Faith, which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved,' or rather, as before, he cannot be safe, he cannot be in a state of salvation. These words, as they are generally understood, are supposed to imply the eternal damnation of all, who do not believe in the doctrines laid down in the Creed, whether



they have rightly and fully understood them or not, whether even they have ever heard them or not.

Yet, certainly, the writer of the Creed could never have meant this: for he must have excepted baptised infants, and young children, from so sweeping a condemnation. He must, surely, also have excepted the weak in intellect and the insane; and, if so, by parity of reasoning, he must have excepted the untaught and ignorant,—ignorant by no fault of their own,—and as helpless in things divine as children; he must have excepted the heathen, who have never heard at all the Message of Life. And, looking more closely at the Creed, we find in each of these two clauses a saving word to this effect. If a man is required to 'keep' the Catholic Faith, he must first have *received* it,—not with his ears only, but with his inner being, with his head and his heart. The truth must have been brought home to him, with more or less of clearness and fulness; his conscience must have felt the power of it, more or less forcibly, as the message of God to his soul. Now, in proportion to what he has thus received, he is bound to embrace it, to keep it 'whole and undefiled' with falsehood, impurity, and sin, with 'whatsoever loveth and maketh a lie;' he is bound to 'believe it *faithfully*,' as the last clause of the Creed says, that is, with an honest and sincere obedience to it, as far as he has received it. If he does not, if he lives unfaithfully, if he does not walk in the light, and bring his daily doings to the light, which has thus been vouchsafed to him, and think, and speak, and act, as a servant of the light,—if he 'loves the darkness rather than the light, because his deeds are evil,'—that man does not need the Bible, or the Athanasian Creed, to tell him that he is condemned. He is condemned already. His own heart will judge him, and pronounce him to be a guilty creature. He will begin to feel the gnawing of the Undying Worm, the scorching of the Eternal Fire, within him. And he will know in himself that this woe will follow him all his life through, while he clings to the sin which is destroying him, and in the life to come,—that in the other world also God's righteous judgment will rest upon him—that he will 'perish everlastingly.' He will perish—not temporarily—suffering merely, with respect to things of time and sense, that wretchedness of outward condition, which sometimes follows sin in this life, by which some perish miserably before our eyes, but which ends at last with this body of corruption, and may even be relieved while it lasts, or, perhaps, may be escaped altogether. But he will perish 'everlastingly,' with respect to things eternal and spiritual, those things that are real and permanent, and concern his true being, which was made for a higher world than this; he will suffer then, as he even now suffers, that inward misery, of which the worst external woe of this life is but a figure—which may be coupled in this world with outward woe or with outward prosperity, but, in the world to come, will be mitigated by no relief, as it may be here; he will then not be able, as he may be now, to ignore, as it were, the pangs of a guilty conscience, and brave the terrors of God's Displeasure. He will then be all alone with God, and with the awful judgment, which a Father's Anger and a Father's Love has appointed for him. There will he perish everlastingly—and will lie perishing, until that Father sees the work is done. In the cold and gloom of night he will lie, in the outer darkness, shut out from Home, and the place where God's brighter glory shines, while the faithful ones are admitted within, and the children look upon their Father's Face,

and rejoice in His Love,—or, to use the other figure, he will pass into that ‘Eternal Fire,’ which is ever burning to destroy all evil things in God’s Kingdom. And there, too will he lie, till God sees that the work is done, the wood, and hay, and stubble consumed, the filth purged away, and the pure gold left, or silver, or precious stone, which, even in the heart of that sinful child, the Father’s eye can see.

I do not assert that this is what was meant by the writer of the Creed; for it bears the stamp, as I have said, of a harsh and intemperate age, when men were too ready to consign each other to endless perdition. But it is all that we can understand when we use the words, in accordance with what we feel to be the general teaching of the Bible, and the spirit of the Gospel, and in accordance also with the Article which tells us that we must ‘receive God’s promises in such wise, as they be *generally* set forth to us in Holy Scriptures.’

That we are warranted, however, as Christians, in thus interpreting the damnatory clauses of the Athanasian Creed, we may learn from the practice even of the Church of Rome. For that Church receives the Creed, even as we do, and yet it believes in some remedial measures after death; though it takes the judgment out of the hands of Him, who is the only true and righteous Judge, and assumes the power, beyond what is written, to lay down the laws of the world beyond the grave.

## SERMON ON THE EUCHARIST,

Referred to in Note on 180.

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ST. JOHN VI. 51.

*I am the Living Bread which came down from Heaven: if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever: and the Bread that I will give is My Flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.*

WE shall all remember those memorable words, which declare the secret of Man's life from the beginning, and will declare it to the end of time—yes, and throughout eternity. 'It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.' These things which we see and handle, the bread and other outward things, with which the life of our bodies is sustained, have after all no power of supporting life, but what God gives them. It is His Word alone that makes them what they are to us. By that Word alone, by that ever-working gracious Will of God our Heavenly Father, do we find that this bread has power to nourish our bodies, and sustain our present life in being. How wretched, then, must be the blindness and folly of those who seek the bread of this life even, the daily supplies of food and refreshment, which their bodies need and long for, yet forget Him, Who alone is the very Source and Giver of all these good things which they desire and enjoy,—in Whom alone they 'live, and move, and have their being!'

But then the bread of this life does but shadow forth to us the Bread of the Soul—the Living Bread, by which alone our spirits live—and which the same good Word of God vouchsafes so freely and bountifully to us. As daily we need to sustain our bodies with the wholesome and pleasant food which God supplies to us, so surely do we need that our souls should feed upon the Living Bread, if *their* life is to be sustained. And that bread the Living Word shall give us, Who came to us as the utterance of His Heavenly Father's Gracious Will towards us. Rather He is Himself the Living Bread, and we must feed on Him daily, and mingle by faith His Body and Blood with our spiritual being, so that we may be truly one with Him, 'Members of His Body, of His Flesh, and of His Bones.' As He says to us Himself in the text, 'I am the Living Bread which came down from Heaven: if any man eat of this Bread, he shall live for ever: and the Bread which I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.'

I desire this day, with the Blessing of God, to consider with you more closely these words of our Gracious Lord. It is of deepest importance that we should consider them, and clearly understand what they mean: because we remember how it follows, a few verses after the text, from the lips of Jesus Christ Himself, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you.' Unless, therefore, we have, each of us, been 'eating His Flesh,' and 'drinking His Blood,' we have here the Eternal Truth Himself testifying that 'we have no life in us.'

And the subject is specially appropriate to this occasion, when we are gathered together to witness the admission of one here present into the Holy Order of Deacons, and to take part, all of us, I trust, in the solemn service of the day, with our Christian sympathy and prayers. It is true that, by the Order of the Church, a Deacon is not fully authorized to be a dispenser of God's Holy Word and Sacraments, as a Priest is. He may baptise, in the absence of the Priest, and he may preach, with the Bishop's permission. But he may not minister, in the celebration of the Holy Communion, except as a helper to the Priest, whose office alone it is to consecrate the Bread and Wine, which are the signs to us in that Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord. Nevertheless, the Deacon, as well as the Priest, hath 'obtained part of the

Ministry' of Christ. Of him also—more especially if he be one who is to minister chiefly among the heathen—may it be said, in the words of St. Paul, that 'the Glorious Gospel of the Blessed God is committed to his trust.' It behoves him to consider well what a precious trust this is, which he has received of God, on behalf of his fellow-men; and in what way he is to explain, for them as well as for himself, such words as these, 'Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you.' It behoves him to ponder well what are the great truths of that 'Glorious Gospel,' which he is to be continually setting forth before the eyes of his flock, that so, in God's own Light, they may see Light, even 'the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ.'

For him, therefore, who is this day to be ordained a Deacon in the Church of Christ, and for you, and for me, my brethren, it may be well that we should together ponder for a while on these words of our Blessed Lord. What then do these expressions mean in the text? What are we to understand by this 'eating the Flesh,' and 'drinking the Blood,' of the Son of Man?

Now, in the first place, it is plain that our Lord is not here referring, expressly and exclusively, to the Holy Eucharist, which we call the 'Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood.' I say this is plain; because the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not yet instituted, and yet He seems to speak as if there were those, who were already 'eating His Flesh,' and 'drinking His Blood,' and who actually had thereby 'Eternal Life.' For He says, 'Whoso eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, hath Eternal Life, and I will raise him up at the last day.' At all events, if the spiritual Food, of which He is here speaking, were only to be obtained by partaking of the Holy Sacrament, then those whom He was addressing, the Apostles whom He had chosen, the disciples whom He was teaching, inasmuch as they had not yet eaten the Flesh of the Son of Man in this way, nor drunk His Blood, would have had 'no life in them.' Moreover the holy men of old, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Patriarchs, Psalmists, and Prophets, would have had 'no life in them'—would have died in their sins, and perished. Not to speak of the mass of human kind, who would all be lying under a sentence of death, notwithstanding the coming of the Son of God into the world, and the publishing of those 'good tidings

of great joy, which were to be to all people,'—our own children even, though baptized into the Name of their Redeemer, and walking, as we trust, in the fear of God and in the path of pious duty, but not yet of age to be confirmed, and so be admitted to the Holy Table, would have 'no life in them.' If they could not 'eat the Flesh,' and 'drink the Blood,' of Jesus Christ their Lord, in some other way than by partaking of the Holy Sacrament, all these would be lying now under the doom of death, having 'no life in them.' The words are so plain and strong: we cannot escape them. 'Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you.'

It is certain, then, that we must seek some other meaning for them than this, that they are spoken expressly and exclusively of the Holy Eucharist. I do not believe, indeed, that our Blessed Lord was speaking expressly of the Holy Eucharist at all in this passage. Yet, if we wish to find the true meaning of Eucharist made plain to us, we may find it here. For here our Blessed Lord condescends to teach us what that Holy Feast is meant to signify—how, while it is itself a Feast, a means of grace and spiritual strength to all who worthily receive it, it is a sign and pledge to us of *that* eating and drinking of Christ's Body and Blood, by which alone our souls can live, and which is carried on within us by every act of true faith which we exercise upon the Life and Death of our Risen Lord, as really and truly, and in the very same kind of way, as when we meet together at His Command, and eat the Bread and drink the Wine 'in remembrance of Him.' Beware then, brethren, of attaching a superstitious meaning to the Holy Sacrament, and fancying that our Lord is Present to us more really, when we eat and drink at his Holy Table, than He is when we are privileged to have communion with Him at any other time, and in any other manner,—as if, by partaking of the consecrated Bread and Wine, we are made, in some mysterious way, more truly partakers of Christ's Body and Blood, than we are by virtue of any other act of living faith, whether wrought in our secret chamber, or among the busy duties of daily life, or amidst the prayers and praises of the Great Congregation. It is the result of man's theorising, and not derived from God's Revelation, to attempt to make a distinction *in kind* between our Lord's Presence in the Holy Eucharist, and that which He vouch-

safes to us, when we kneel in our own retirement, or meet in our ordinary assemblies for the Common Worship of Prayer and Praise.

As I do not feel, so would I not speak, lightly of the dignity of that Holy Feast, to which our Lord invites us—of the blessedness of those who ‘come to it, holy and clean, in the marriage garment required by God in Holy Scripture, and so partake fully in the rich benefits thereof—or of the great peril, either of the careless neglect, or of the unworthy receiving, of the same. Just as we believe that there is a special benefit to be looked for, by reason of our Lord’s gracious promise, that He will specially be present ‘where two or three are gathered together in His Name,’ beyond that which is promised to private prayer, and yet we believe that in both cases He will be present with us in the same *kind* of way,—so must we hold that the highest and holiest Form of Worship, in which we can ‘eat the Flesh and drink the Blood of the Son of Man, is when we partake together of the One Bread and the One Cup, as members of One Body in Him. Yet still, as I have said before, so say I now again in your hearing, the bread which we then break, the cup which we bless, in token of our Lord’s broken Body and poured-out Blood, are visible signs to us of that Communion with Him, of that Communication to us of His Body and Blood, which is daily and hourly supporting our spirits’ life. This Divine Food is, indeed, imparted to us, at that moment, at the Holy Table, if we come with penitent believing hearts to seek it. The Sacrament is not only a sign and seal to us of God’s grace, but an actual means of grace itself to all devout receivers. But the Food which is then supplied to us, the grace and strength which we then receive for our souls, is the same as that which we may trust to receive at all times, according to our need, when diligently treading the path of Christian Duty, and looking upward by Faith unto our Lord.

‘I am the Living Bread which came down from Heaven.’ Yes, brethren! our Blessed Lord is always Present with us, as really and truly Present, and in the very same kind of way, when we bow our hearts before Him in public or in private,—when we speak the word of Truth and Love, or act the deed of Faith, in His Name, in the commonest walk of life, in the midst of our everyday duties and charities,—as when on some High Festival we

gather round His Board, and keep the Feast at His command. This, indeed, is that Real Presence of our Lord, of which you have doubtless heard. We must not think of the Holy Sacrament as *only* a 'badge of our Christian Profession,' as *only* a sign and seal of God's Favour to us, as *only* a memorial-feast, in which we make mention of the great things which Christ hath done for us, and look for no special blessing as coupled with the faithful use, and no special harm to be dreaded from the neglect or abuse, of it. We cannot venture, brethren, to neglect, without fear of consequences, any plain command of our gracious Lord, and more especially so, when it is one which the Apostles understood so well, that we know, in the Primitive Church, they habitually practised it, and far more frequently than we do now. By so doing, we cannot but be sorrowful losers of the rich gifts of Grace, which He has in store for those who faithfully obey His Word. Even if we know not *how* He will vouchsafe to bless us, we may be sure of this, that if He has promised to be Present specially, 'where two or three are met together in His Name,' so most certainly will He be Present, whenever they are 'met together in His Name' to do what He Himself has expressly commanded. If we understood no more about the matter, we might be sure of this, and be sure also that they who abuse the Sacred Rite which He has enjoined upon us—who come to it with light, careless steps, and irreverent, impenitent, unchastened hearts—shall incur the guilt of those who 'do not discern the Lord's Body,'—who do not *discern it*, that is, as the word properly means, separate it, separate it from all things that are unclean and unholy—who do not rightly value and esteem it—who do not appreciate it in its mighty depth of meaning, and prepare themselves for devout meditation upon the two great mysteries, summed up for us in the mention of His Body and His Blood, of which we are reminded in that Holy Sacrament. These two great mysteries should, indeed, be the Food of our *daily* life—should be pondered by us continually, and wrought into our very being by daily acts of faith and prayer. But on these High Days of the Church they are specially presented to us, and set before us more distinctly and visibly, that so they may abide with us on other days. 'We 'eat the Flesh and drink the Blood of the Son of Man,' when we approach, with humble faith, the Holy Eucharist, in order that so we may be able more vividly to realize His Presence at *all* times,



and (in His own gracious words) may 'eat Him,' and 'live by Him,' habitually and constantly. Just so the Lord's Day is set apart by us, Christians, as it was by the Church of Old, for Holy Worship. And thus we are reminded that *all* days are to be the Lord's—that all are to be sanctified and set apart for Him—that the spirit of the Sunday must flow over into the week days, and our whole life and our whole being be made one living sacrifice to Him who hath loved us. And the Sunday services not only remind us of this, but help us to accomplish it.

But I have said that there are two great mysteries, which are visibly set before us in the Holy Sacrament of our Lord's Body and Blood. The one is that which is represented by the Bread, which is the symbol of His Body, and *that* of His Humanity. The other is that represented by the Wine, which is the symbol of His Blood, and *that* of His Suffering, Humiliation, and Death. These two things are together set before us in the Scriptures as the ground of our Christian hope; and one without the other is not sufficient for us. His Body and His Blood—His Life and His Death—His *Coming* into our nature to take part with the sons of men, to be our Brother-Man, with all the feelings of a true Man, full of love, and tender pity, and brotherly kindness to us all, full of righteousness and truth and love before God, a perfect Man, in whom the Father is well pleased, and with us in Him, as the second Head of our race—and His Dying in our nature, His being 'obedient even unto death,' His yielding up His human life upon the Cross into His Father's hands, as the crowning act of that 'full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction,' which He offered as the Son of Man for the sins of the whole world.

Thus, then, we have need to make memorial both of His Body and His Blood—of the Body which He took, of the Blood which He shed. We are to feed upon this Living Bread, which came down from Heaven, that, so feeding, we may 'have life,' that, so living, we may live 'for ever.' For this spiritual Bread, which we must eat, He tells us must be 'His Flesh, which he will give for the life of the world.' Daily and hourly we should be thus feeding on this Living Bread, as daily and hourly we should be drinking of the Living Water, which His Love also supplies to us. And so, too, daily and hourly, we shall be dwelling in Him, and He in us. 'He that eateth my Flesh,' He says, 'and drinketh

my Blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him.' Our Blessed Lord does not mean that by eating once or twice only in our lives, or once a month, or once a week, this heavenly Food, when it is offered to us in the Holy Sacrament, we shall 'have eternal life.' He means that we should be eating it continually, that it may become, as it were, incorporated with our whole spiritual frame by a true living faith, the very strength and sustenance of our spirit's life. Let this be the use we make of the Holy Eucharist, not to regard it, in the words of one of old, as a 'tremendous mystery,' only to be approached by us with unutterable fear and trembling, as something wholly different from the rest of our daily spiritual life, in the hope of then realizing, in some ineffable extraordinary way, the Presence of our Lord, as we do not at other times. But let us come to it, as the appointed means for keeping us in mind of that far more awful, but withal cheering, hope-inspiring, life-giving Mystery, of the Real Presence with us of our Lord at all times, of our dependence upon Him, of our union with Him—as a means for helping and quickening us to 'work out our salvation daily with fear and trembling, because it is God'—our gracious God and Father, by His Spirit, which He hath vouchsafed to us, through the human life and death of His own dear Son—it is God Himself who 'worketh in us both to will and to do of His own good pleasure.'

Were it not so—were the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord only to be eaten in the Holy Communion—I know not how the Church could presume to fix any limit to the number of times a year, 'not less than three at the least,' at which the Communion in every parish should be celebrated. Surely we should, in that case, be bound to be perpetually communicating, Sunday after Sunday, day after day, rather during every hour of waking life—at least, as often as we can do so, without forsaking any plain positive duty. Thanks be to God, we *may* feed thus upon the Living Bread—yea, we may feed upon the Body and Blood of Christ our Lord—on Sundays and on week days, from day to day, from hour to hour, even when we cannot press the Sacrament with our lips at all, if we are feeding in our hearts by faith upon Him. We shall not then presume to despise or neglect His Holy Table. We shall always be ready to draw near to it, when the call and opportunity are given to us. We shall always desire to have our faith

quickened, and our souls strengthened and refreshed with that spiritual Food, which is verily and indeed taken and received by all faithful souls in the Lord's Supper.

Upon this point listen to the striking words of our own Church Prayer Book, in one of the Rubrics at the end of the Service for the Visitation of the Sick. 'If a man, either by reason of extremity of sickness, or for want of warning in due time to the Curate, or for lack of company to receive with him, or by any other just impediment, do not receive the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, the Curate shall instruct him that, if he do truly repent him of his sins, and steadfastly believe that Jesus Christ hath suffered death upon the Cross for him, and shed His Blood for his redemption, earnestly remembering the benefits he hath thereby, and giving him thanks therefore, he *doth* eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ profitably to his soul's health, although he do not receive the Sacrament with his mouth.' If it be said that these words suppose the case of one, who does desire in his heart to eat the Holy Supper of the Lord, and that the Church has only here provided for a case of extreme necessity, assuring her child that the desire of his heart will be heard and answered with the blessing of Him, 'Who seeth in secret, and will reward openly,' yet must there not be multitudes in whom the same desire exists, as really and truly as in the heart of this sick man, and who, by necessity as strong as his, are kept from sharing outwardly in this Sacred Feast? Missionaries, labouring among the heathen, where there is no ordained Minister—settlers in a colony like this, dwelling far from the public means of grace—the many who travel by land or by sea—those detained at home by weakness, or the care of children, or any other 'just impediment,' though they may live under the care of a pastor, and within reach of the sound of the church-going bell—those even who *have* a Minister, and diligently attend the House of Prayer, yet are rarely invited to the Holy Table, perhaps through the indifference and negligence of their spiritual guide, perhaps through his inability to summon them, from not having received authority in the Church to do so—shall it not be said of many of these, that the desire of their hearts is towards the remembrance of their Lord's command, and towards the Feast which He has made for them? And surely He, that has quickened their hearts, and kindled these desires

within them, 'will hearken thereto;' and they, too, like the sick man, shall 'eat and drink profitably to their souls' health, the Body and Blood of their Saviour Christ, although they do not receive the Sacrament with their mouth.'

We may not then neglect this Holy Feast, which our Lord hath commanded to be observed. No true Christian will do so. We shall most thankfully embrace each opportunity, which the order of the Church allows, for 'breaking bread' together in the Name of our Lord, and partaking of this Holy Communion, which will not only be a source of life and strength to each faithful individual soul, but will be so specially, because it witnesses of Grace, and Love, and Blessing, for all—because it testifies that we all, who are baptized, are members of one Body in Him. The Holy Supper is one of the Sacraments, which, as the Church teaches us, is '*generally necessary for salvation.*' But, when deprived by the Providence of God of this privilege, or when hindered by any 'just impediment'—such as we can plead before Him who seeth in secret, and who can be deceived by no juggle of the conscience,—we can, under such circumstances, eat the Sacred Body and drink the Precious Blood of Christ our Lord, by devout meditation and prayer, by acts of repentance, faith, and thanksgiving, at home, in our retirement, without the use of Bread and Wine, with no Table upon which to spread the Elements, with no Minister at hand to bless them. And we can derive our needful supply of spiritual life thereby, and 'dwell in Christ our Lord, and He in us.' We can do this just as really and truly, as we can worship at all in private, whenever we are hindered by any just impediment from joining in the prayers and praises of the Church—just as really and truly, as we can then go into our closet, and shut the door, and bend the knee to our Father in Heaven, and be sure of having fresh gifts of spiritual life supplied to us; and this we know can only come (as our Lord tells us in the text) by 'eating His Flesh and drinking His Blood,' which we therefore do effectually in all such moments of devotion and prayer.

O! thanks be to God, our Living Lord is present everywhere to the believing, penitent, and prayerful soul. And we can see Him with the eyes of faith, and touch Him with our hands, and feed upon His Divine Humanity, His Life and Death, His Body and Blood, as that which God has given to be the Bread of our

Souls, the means of quickening, reviving, and strengthening us,—though we may be far away from our fellow-Christians, far from the goodly Houses of Prayer and Common Worship, far from the reach of Christ's appointed Ministers—living, it may be, among a barbarous people, and amidst the wild tribes of heathenism.

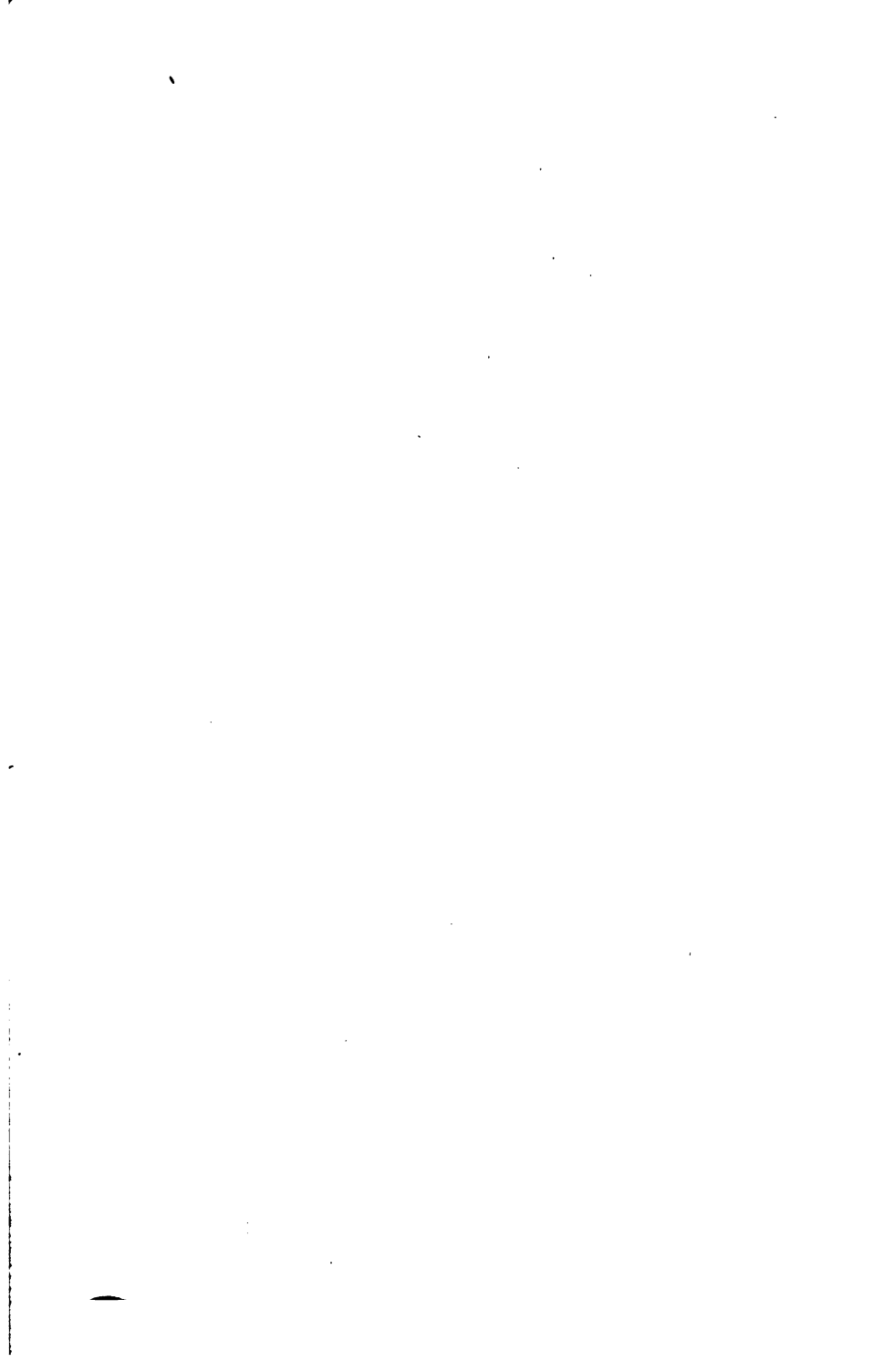
And should this be the lot of any one of us, let us remember, further, what is written in the text, from the Blessed Lips of the Son of Man: 'The Bread, which I will give, is My Flesh, which I will give for the life of the World.' For the *life of the World*, He says—not for the life of believers only—of those who already know something of the Truth, who are permitted to rejoice in some measure even now in the bright rays of the Sun of Righteousness, who are privileged, beyond others of the great human family, to look with glad eyes and hearts upon the Light of Life. But 'I will give my Flesh,' He says, 'for the life of the *World*'—of the whole human race. I will give it that all the World may have life—that the curse of death may be taken off the whole race together, and the free gift of life be imparted to all. Yes! in the secret counsels of Almighty Wisdom, He *had* given it already—His Flesh—for the life of the world. He was 'the Lamb slain,' in the purpose of God, 'from before the foundation of the world.' And through Him has life been given to us. That life, which the first Adam's sin had forfeited, has been restored to us in our Lord Jesus Christ. Even as it is written, 'As by the offence of the one man judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.' And again, 'God was in Christ reconciling the World unto Himself, not imputing our trespasses unto us.'

Mark then, my brother, now about to be admitted to the Holy Functions of the Ministry, you will be an Ambassador for Christ to the Heathen to tell them these things—to tell them plainly that all men, the whole human race, are receiving even now the blessings of life, of life for the body, and of life, spiritual life, for the soul, from Him, Who is the Life and Light of all men—the 'True Light,' as St. John says, 'Who lighteneth every man that cometh into the world.' You are to tell them that all men are sharing even now in the blessings of the Great Redemption—are made partakers of Christ's Humanity, of His Life and of His Death—are deriving life and strength from Him, Who 'gave His Flesh for the

life of the World'—'Who (says St. Paul) gave Himself a ransom for All, to be testified in due time'—'Who (says St. John) is the Propitiation, not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole World.' You are to bear in mind that the Sacraments of the Christian Church are not meant to be exclusive, negative, condemning, in their character; but they are meant to be standing Witnesses of God's Love to all the World. Just as we do not suppose that, because we keep the Sunday as the Lord's Day, therefore the six other days are *not* the Lord's, but may be given to the World, the Flesh, and the Devil;—just as we believe that the Sunday being kept by us as the Lord's Day, from week to week, is a standing Witness that all days of the week are His, and a means of helping us to consecrate our whole lives to Him;—so, too, the Church itself is set up, not to cut off and to condemn the whole world besides, as having no part in Christ, no share in the Blessings of His Coming, but as a Witness that all men are Christ's, that the whole human race belongs to Him, Who has *redeemed* them, Who has *bought them back* for Himself, Who lived, and died, and rose again, for all. It is set up as a Light in the World,—as a City shining bright upon a hill, that cannot be hid—not in order to throw the gloom of darkness over all the world besides, but in order to witness of the Love, which is even now brooding over all, as it did at first, when the earth was without form and void, and the Spirit of God, informing, life-giving, was moving over the face of the waters. Our baptism is the ratification to each one of us individually of those Gracious Promises, which were made to Him, who is the Great Head of our Race, as the Representative of us all. And while it admits us, so to speak, into God's inner Family of Sons and Daughters, and gives us a claim, beyond the rest of our fellow-men, to look up cheerfully to Heaven, and call the Great God our Father; it is a Witness also, that He, who came down from Heaven to be the Son of Man, by His Body and His Blood, 'hath redeemed us, Christians, and *all mankind*.'

And so too the Holy Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood is a standing Witness to us, with its 'outward visible sign,' appointed by our Blessed Lord Himself, Who knew what was in man, and how we should need this constantly-recurring Feast, these outward symbols, to bring vividly before us Eternal Realities—it is a Witness, I say, of the Great Fact that by Him alone we live—

by Him, Whom God Almighty, of His tender Love towards mankind, hath sent to take upon Him our Flesh, and to give that Flesh for the life of the World—by Him, Who is the Word of God, in Whom is Life, and that Life the Light of men. It is a Witness that, if any man, whether Christian or Heathen, have any one spark of spiritual life within him, have any one good thought, or movement, or desire, upon which he strives to act in his daily duties, it must be because he has been fed, in his measure, in some real and life-giving way, with the Living Bread, although, perhaps, he knew it not—because he has been drawing light and life, however unconsciously, from the Living Word, made Flesh for man—because to him also has flowed some divine virtue from our Blessed Lord's Humanity—because it has been granted to him to 'eat the Flesh,' and 'drink the Blood' of the Son of Man, although, perhaps, not yet revealed to him—because he has had that spark of inward life supplied to him, by virtue of his relation, as a member of the Great Human Family, to its One Living Head, to the Lord and Elder Brother of us all.





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